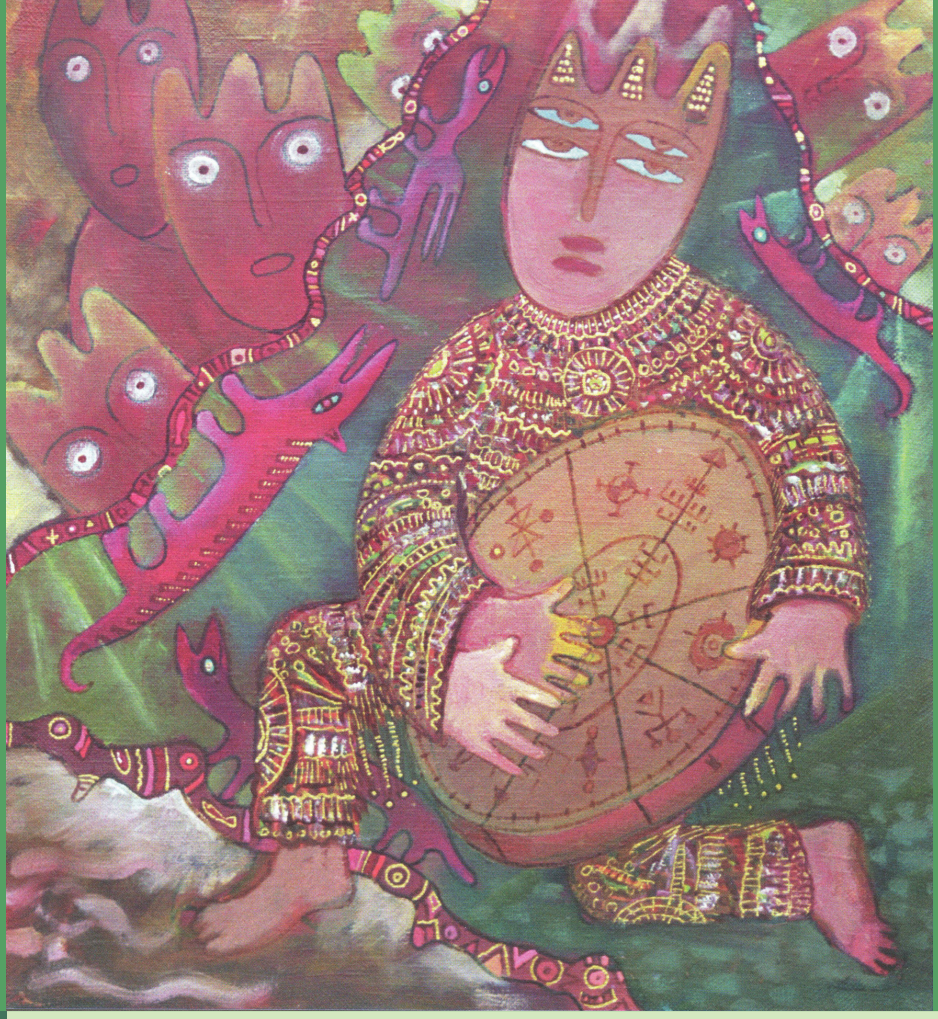

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Mythic Discourses

Studies in Uralic Traditions

Edited by Frog, Anna-Leena Siikala & Eila Stepanova

Studia Fennica
Folkloristica

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Preface

Myths are both representations of present-day discourses in local communities and manifestations of the *longue durée* of culture. In handling the reasons for human and social existence, diverse mythologies answer the same key questions, even though the conclusions and their poetic expressions vary from culture to culture. Mythologies may appear confused or confusing because they present the basic ideas of vernacular worldview and its accompanying system of values in mythic images and metaphoric language, full of conflicting ideas. When addressing both cultural and existential questions, myths create a connection to the principal events of the past, and in so doing, they gather together a social whole united by ideas of a common origin. As shown, for example, by *Kalevala*, the mythic epic of Finns and Karelians, myths are important tools for creating a sense of self-defined identity. Therefore, research into mythic traditions has been vital in interpretations of "European" cultural capital and in distinguishing the characteristic cultural features of small ethnic groups.

In Finland, research into Uralic languages and cultures has a strong tradition, beginning with M. A. Castrén, Elias Lönnrot, Kai and Otto Donner, Julius and Kaarle Krohn, A. Kannisto, K. F. Karjalainen, T. Lehtisalo, Uno Harva and Martti Haavio. Mythology provides valuable material for research on language and culture. This was already apparent in the 19th century, when researchers interested in Finno-Ugrian languages and cultures conducted field work among scattered North European native cultures and Siberian peoples. Consequently, the research and resources of these interrelated areas of study have been intimately interconnected from the very outset. A remarkable number of collections of folklore and folk poetry as well as monographic studies on Uralic religions were published. Owing especially to the work of the Finno-Ugric Society and the Finnish Literature Society, a great deal of the mythology of the Finno-Ugric linguistic area is available for study. Both in Russia and Finland as well as in Hungary and Estonia, many generations of researchers have applied themselves to the collection, publication and investigation of these materials. As a result, research into Uralic mythologies has a particularly good infrastructure with archives, libraries and new field work collections – resources which it pays to exploit. On the other hand, a great part of this knowledge has been gathered by Russian researchers and it has remained unknown to many researchers in the West. One goal of the present collection is to raise awareness and open discussion between these different research traditions.

The study of mythic traditions has recently grown in importance in Western Europe. This is partly because new archaeological methods and linguistic findings have opened new directions in the study of pre-history, and on the other hand, this is the outcome of considering the identification of a common European heritage important for uniting Europe socially to support its unification within a common political entity. In Finland, the 150 year jubilees for the first published edition of the (*Old*) *Kalevala* in 1985, and

for the greatly revised and expanded second edition of the (*New*) *Kalevala* in 1999, have rekindled interest in Kalevala-meter oral poetry, bringing new approaches and new questions concerning the singers, their local communities, performance and variation of this poetry. These approaches have opened a broad field for research and many of the new paths still await investigation. A new wave of interest in mythology and ethnic religions has also been observed in the different Republics of post-Soviet Russia. Young artists of Finno-Ugrian Republics, for example, follow the modern trend in the globalising world in their quest for mythology.

Uralic languages (Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic languages) are spoken by indigenous peoples of Northern Eurasia in the territory extending from Fennoscandia to West Siberia. Even if Uralic groups are linguistically related, their histories and social, economic and cultural life differ greatly. In addition, all these ethnic groups or nations have had different linguistic, cultural, social and religious contacts with other groups and nations during their long and various histories. Many Uralic groups have maintained and recreated their religious and mythological traditions in spite of the fact that the traces of archaic religious systems have merged with the ethnic religions of neighbouring peoples and also with world religions propagated by the churches. The religious and mythic traditions of Uralic peoples are therefore especially rich and versatile, reflecting the cultural history of Northwest Eurasia. Both comparative research and fieldwork-based studies focusing on the contemporary cultures benefit from a knowledge of vernacular Uralic mythic traditions, and it is therefore important to raise awareness of modern perspectives on these traditions and make those perspectives more accessible.

These thoughts were the point of departure for the international project, the *Encyclopaedia of Uralic Mythologies* series, initiated by Russian, Finnish and Hungarian researchers, financed by the Academy of Finland, and published by Akádemiai Kiádo (Budapest) and the Finnish Literature Society (Helsinki). It became clear in the meetings and symposiums of this project which took place in Helsinki, and particularly at a symposium during the Tartu Finno-Ugric Conference (2004), that new, common venues for publication were necessary for the extensive international network of researchers interested in Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic cultures. From these discussions, the basic idea for the present book was born – the idea that researchers representative of different Uralic groups and research on those groups examine the vernacular mythologies of their respective cultures. This idea has gradually evolved into the aspiration and the hope that drawing these researchers of diverse backgrounds together will open its own evolving discourse. This will offer new and reciprocal insights into each culture's traditions and their metamorphoses as well as offer deeper perspectives and understandings of these cultures and aspects of their shared (and unshared) cultural heritage.

Mythic Discourses brings together a broad range of scholars to address the many facets of myth in Uralic cultures. Because the mythologies of the Uralic peoples differ considerably, mythology is understood here in a broad sense, including not only myths proper but also information about religious

beliefs and associated rituals. Many articles of this volume address mythic discourses in the present day or in the wake of process of modernization, examining how aspects of vernacular heritage continue to function as social resources through emergent interpretations and revaluations. Studies emphasizing the synchronic dynamism of living traditions are paralleled by articles examining diachronic processes, investigating continuities in mythic images, motifs, myths and genres. The synchronic and diachronic emphases are complementary, matching perspectives on the dynamism of mythic discourses in living and changing cultural contexts with perspectives on the *longue durée* of these traditions and their transformations. The remarkable range and breadth of Uralic cultures discussed, extending from diverse living cultures to evidence of a common cultural heritage or early cultural contacts, offers a significantly richer and more developed perspective on Uralic traditions than any one article could accomplish alone.

The articles of *Mythic Discourses* are organized into four parts. As the most characteristic feature of a mythology tends to be its mythic figures and the narratives attached to them, the first part of the collection consists of five articles on "Gods and Their Stories". These articles address traditions of anthropomorphic gods and heroes as well as narratives associated with them – or, more accurately, the constellations of images and events that make up the narrative cores of myths. They focus on the place of these figures and their narratives in the history of cultural discourse. Across this group of articles, emphasis is distributed between the transformations and negotiations of mythic traditions and conceptions in the wake of modernity on the one hand, and historical and comparative discussions of the *longue durée* of these traditions on the other. Together, they provide an essential background for subsequent parts of the collection and their diverse perspectives on the emergence, cultural activity and metamorphoses of traditions through mythic discourses. The second part of the collection, comprised of four articles, is "*Sampo*", addressing diverse mythic discourses that intersect surrounding a single, dynamic mythic image. Mythic images are perhaps the most central, fundamental and most richly contested elements in mythic discourses, and the object called *sampo* in Finno-Karelian mythology is perhaps the most mysterious and extensively discussed mythic image in all of Uralic mythologies. These articles variously address the dynamism and metamorphoses of this image in living cultural contexts, its *longue durée*, and also that of figures and narratives attached to it. The third part of the collection turns from intersections of mythic discourses surrounding a central mythic image to distinctions and divisions of such discourses connected with fundamental distinctions within a culture. This part, "Gender, Genre and Mythic Patterns", consists of four articles addressing variation at the intersection of gender and genre, with considerations of patterns emergent within corpora across genres and cultural practices. The concluding part of *Mythic Discourses* narrows still further to consider socially constructed realities in space and time through cultural practices in "Place, Space and Time". These five articles build on preceding discussions in examinations of the role of mythic discourses to inform and construct basic understandings of the world where beliefs,

location, narration and/or ritual meet. The closing contributions bring discussion full circle by returning to the theme of gods, this time in relation to sacred sites and ritual practice, and to cultural contacts and the *longue durée* of mythic images in the construction of the landscape.

"Gods and Their Stories" opens with a foundational discussion by Anna-Leena Siikala (University of Helsinki) that introduces theories of and methodological approaches to myths and mythology. Siikala's contribution provides a general background and context for discussions of mythology, its sources and mythic discourse in later articles, opening questions and issues ranging from comparative studies and long-term perspectives to current revaluations and revitalizations of traditions in the present day. Ülo Valk (University of Tartu) advances discussion in a sensitive treatment of mythic discourses surrounding thunder in Estonian folklore. Valk offers a valuable exposition of the transition and transformation of vernacular traditions of the thunder-god and his adversary the devil through the social processes of change incited by modernity and alternative ideologies carried through scientific explanations and textbook education. Lauri Harvilahti (Finnish Literature Society) and Elina Rahimova (Institute of World Literature, Moscow, Russian Academy of Science) pick up the theme of adaptations of mythic traditions to a modern milieu in the case of Lemminkäinen of Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry, and employ this discussion as a springboard for exploring the problematics of comparative study in attempting to open the *longue durée* of a tradition's history. Harvilahti and Rahimova open by contrasting Elias Lönnrot adaptation of Lemminkäinen into *Kalevala* for Romantic and nationalist ends with the life of this figure in the oral epic tradition, and then turn to outline diverse typological parallels in other cultures that have held the often deceptive promise of illuminating the background or origins of Lemminkäinen's epic and tragic death. Clive Tolley (University of Turku) advances further into the problems of comparative research, examining the unexpected course taken by a mythic motif associated with Uralic traditions, and transferred from god to god prior to its emerge in Norse Germanic mythology. Tolley raises important questions about how we think about cultural history and myths as cultural heritage. Vladimir Napolskikh (Udmurt State University) closes the section with his vast survey of a world-creation myth, contextualizing the Uralic tradition in a much broader frame. Napolskikh correlates the cultural distribution of the myth with genetic markers to propose a correspondence between cultural practices of mythological narrative transmission and genetic ethnic heritage.

"*Sampo*" presents four articles connecting with diverse aspects of that most prominent and mysterious mythic image of Finno-Ugric mythologies, the *sampo* of Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry. Lotte Tarkka (University of Helsinki) opens the discussion with an exploration of how the mysterious *sampo* functioned in the mythology and poetry of Viena Karelia. Tarkka's synchronic focus emphasizes the dynamism of this mythic image as a social resource in both broad social processes as well as in personal and potentially unique imaginal interpretations. Veikko Anttonen (University of Turku) turns from this synchronic dynamism to a conceptual and semantic

approach to the contents of mythological and religious terms. Anttonen offers a valuable overview of the debate surrounding the *sampo*, addressing it as a symbol at the intersection of recorded evidence and its historical roots, and he lays out an approach to the *sampo* as a cultural and semiotic phenomenon. Pekka Hakamies (University of Turku) shifts attention from the *sampo* as an object to the figure of Ilmarinen, the mythic smith who is its creator, with a look at the associated technology identified with this figure. Hakamies assesses impacts of the introduction of iron-working technologies on Finno-Karelian mythology and examines the mythic discourse engendered by new technologies related to utopian fantasies. Frog (University of Helsinki) draws the section to a close by advancing from the mythic image of the *sampo* and figure that creates it to the system of narrative material within which these appear, looking at the role of narrative as a tool for the construction, negotiation and manipulation of images and figures in mythic discourses. Frog develops long-term perspectives to highlight the stratified transformations that provided the mythology with renewed currency in changing cultural contexts before turning to a rich stratum of Germanic models and the social-historical processes through which they were engaged to produce a unique mythological cycle.

"Gender, Genre and Mythic Patterns" opens with Eila Stepanova's (University of Helsinki) discussion of laments, a women's genre found across Finno-Ugric cultures, reconnecting with the opening theme of gods through a case study of the mythic being or beings referred to as *syndyzet* in Karelian laments. Stepanova examines this term's use by lament sub-genre correlated with kalevalaic poetry and other evidence to reveal alternative mythologies associated with the women's tradition in which archaic vernacular conceptions of a Great *Synty* evolved differently. Galina Mišarina (University of Helsinki) builds on the introduction to laments with a treatment of a special Komi genre in which the lament tradition is employed as an incantation to expel pests. Mišarina opens by addressing the problematics of approaching the genre of this tradition before turning to a discussion of alternative uses of full ritual patterns as a form of mythic discourse. Irina Il'ina (Komi Scientific Centre) and Oleg Uljašev (Komi Scientific Centre) expand the examination of Komi traditions to offer an overview of mythic patterns associated with gender in Komi-Zyrjan culture. Il'ina and Uljašev offer perspectives on myths, magic and beliefs revealing two, co-existing cultural strata each bound to a gender, neither of which predominates over the other. Vera Survo (University of Helsinki) concludes the section with an overview of mythic images represented in Karelian embroideries – an area of women's cultural competence comparable to lamenting – and their role in the ritual life of the community. Vera Survo provides comparisons and contrasts to the embroidery traditions of other cultures in the region and outlines aspects of the development of traditions related to embroideries in the modern era.

"Place, Space and Time" presents five articles on intersections of mythic discourse with space and time in the social construction of place. Karina Lukin (University of Helsinki) opens the discussion with narrative traditions concerning the landscape among the Nenets in the present day,

focusing on the traditions surrounding the death of the last shaman in a local community. Lukin situates narrations of this event between belief traditions and social realities on the one hand, as well as between the Soviet construction of the "last shaman" as a modern mythic image and vernacular conceptions of transition to the modern era on the other. Arno Survo (University of Helsinki) turns attention to the multiple valuations and conflicting tendencies in the study of vernacular religion and traditions in Ingria. Arno Survo illustrates this discussion of the ideological attitudes of researchers and their construction of Ingria as a cultural area through the example of discourse surrounding an enigmatic multilingual manuscript found in St. Petersburg. Aado Lintrop (Estonian Literary Museum) returns to broad comparative perspectives, surveying typological parallels in the relationship of particular beliefs and uses of certain genres to conceptions of cyclic time in Finno-Ugric cultures. Concentrating on Estonian and Udmurt traditions, Lintrop offers insights into relationships of cultural practices to conceptions of time and space in the negotiation of boundaries of and encounters with the otherworld. Nadežda Šutova (Udmurt Institute for History, Language and Literature) draws this section back to the themes introduced in the opening of the collection, addressing of several lesser-known gods of the Udmurts. Šutova begins her discussion with a variety of beliefs and cultural practices associated with these figures before turning to a case study on sacred sites surrounding a particular Udmurt village. In the concluding article of the collection, Arja Ahlqvist (University of Helsinki) presents a survey of her extensive fieldwork and research on the so-called "Blue Stone" as a site in living landscapes. Ahlqvist draws together many themes addressed in earlier articles as she unearths the background of this phenomenon, showing that in some regions these sacred stones were assimilated by Slavic groups from now-extinct Finno-Ugric cultures and arguing that the distribution of the "Blue Stone" tradition combines with other evidence to suggest a potentially Finno-Ugric heritage.

Although the individual articles often focus primarily on traditions in a single Uralic culture, these articles open a discourse with one another – a discourse which can only become fully realized through the reader. Together, the articles of *Mythic Discourses* allow the discussions of each part of the collection and also of the collection as a whole to offer a much richer and dynamic perspective on Uralic cultures, both historically and in the present day, than any one article could possibly accomplish alone.

Combining the forces of researchers of Finno-Ugrian and more generally Uralic cultures has faced the challenges posed by the diversity of the contributors' languages and the very different research traditions to which they belong. This collection has undergone a long process of translation and editing, during which new contributions were also selected for the volume. We would like to thank Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, who made the initial translations of many articles for the collection. The original idea for the book belonged to Anna-Leena Siikala, who also participated in the editing process. The central editorial and linguistic tasks were tackled by Frog, who selected new articles with the other two editors, and carefully edited the whole volume. Eila Stepanova's expertise was especially important in

editing the Russian articles, and she together with Frog translated the texts as well as participated in shaping the volume as a whole.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Department of Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki, which offered an inspiring and supportive milieu for our work. We would also like to thank several researchers of the department who took part in writing for this volume. Cooperation with the Komi Research Centre (Uralic Division, Russian Academy of Science) has been both valuable and fruitful during the years required by this work, as have been the contacts with researchers of Udmurt State University, the University of Tartu, the Estonian Literary Museum, and also Karelian researchers who were involved in this undertaking at different stages. Our sincerest appreciation also goes out to the many other individuals, organizations and institutions that have helped, over this long period, to make this publication possible through their advice and support in diverse capacities. Finally, we would like to thank the Academy of Finland, whose financial support was essential in launching the initiative which has come to fruition in the present collection.

12.12.12 Helsinki, Finland
Frog, Anna-Leena Siikala, Eila Stepanova

Note on Transliteration

Cyrillic script has been transliterated according to the scientific system of transliteration.

Cyrillic	Transliteration
А а	a
Б б	b
В в	v
Г г	g
Д д	d
Е е	e
Ё ё	ë
Ж ж	ž
З з	z
И и	i
Й й	j
К к	k
Л л	l
М м	m
Н н	n
О о	o
П п	p
Р р	r
С с	s
Т т	t
У у	u
Ф ф	f
Х х	x
Ц ц	c
Ч ч	č
Ш ш	š
Щ щ	šč
Ы ы	y
Ь ь	′
Ъъ	ě
Э э	è
Ю ю	ju
Я я	ja

In some articles, Komi language text appears according to a Latin script for Komi rather than a transliteration of the Cyrillic form of Komi. Latinate characters in Udmurt Cyrillic script have been retained in transliteration. The Cyrillic script of significant individual words or short phrases has often been presented in parentheses or quotations in order to reduce ambiguity for the benefit of research in these areas.

I

Gods and Their Stories

Anna-Leena Siikala

Myths as Multivalent Poetry

Three Complementary Approaches*

This article considers the mythic traditions of the Finno-Ugric peoples, and the traditions of the Siberian Khanty and Mansi in particular, addressing them through three theoretically different but complementary research approaches. Comparative studies can provide an overview of the myths essential to cultural-historical studies, especially when they take into consideration the environment, history and society of individuals and groups concerned. If, rather than investigating individual myths in isolation, we investigate the mythic corpuses of local groups and whole narratives and songs bearing the characteristic signs of myth, we shall better understand the nature of myths and the reasons for their longevity on the one hand, and their use in political revival movements on the other. This article is based on comparative studies and fieldwork undertaken with Oleg Uljašev among the Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia.

Since myths deal with the basic questions of culture and human existence, research into them has been felt to be important both when formulating the general cultural history of Europeanness and when constructing a cultural identity for small peoples. The former interest explains the importance of research into the mythology of Antiquity; the latter led, among other things, to the collection of the *Kalevala*, the Finnish and Karelian national epic compiled and developed by Elias Lönnrot across the second quarter of the 19th century. The mythic materials of the folk poetry which forms the basis of the *Kalevala* have been seen as illuminating the ancient worldview of the Balto-Finnic peoples. The character of this worldview was already explicated in the 19th century by means of the comparative method (Krohn 1885): points of comparison were sought from ancient Germanic, Slavic

* Earlier versions of sections of this article were published for the Folklore Fellows under the title "Mythic Discourses: Questions of Finno-Ugric Studies of Myth" in FF Network 34 (June 2008), and these themes have been handled in several articles mentioned in the list of references. Earlier versions of a few sections of this article were also published in Anna-Leena Siikala & Oleg Ulyashev, Hidden Rituals and Public Performances. Tradition and Belonging among the Post-Soviet Khanty, Komi and Udmurts (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2011), where additional mythic material can be found. We would like to thank the Academy of Finland for funding our work.

and Baltic traditions. Mythological research in Finland has, however, been connected primarily with research into the cultures of the Finno-Ugric peoples. The Finno-Ugric and the more distant Uralic peoples are connected by linguistic relations. It must be remembered that in their historical, ecological and economic circumstances, and in their cultures, these peoples differ greatly from one another. Finno-Ugric mythologies contain features which indicate ancient cultural unities and interaction in the northern European region (Siikala 2002a, 2002b). Comparative Finno-Ugric cultural research therefore derives its justification from the nature of the object of research, especially when the examination takes note of other northern European cultures.

We know quite a lot about the common mythic materials of the Uralic and Finno-Ugric peoples, and their distribution in the world. In Finland, research into Uralic peoples has a strong tradition, beginning with M. A. Castrén, Kai and Otto Donner, K. F. Karjalainen, Artturi Kannisto, Toivo Lehtisalo, Uno Harva and Martti Haavio. Moreover, the folk poetry collections published as a result of the work of the Finno-Ugric Society contain a great deal of the mythology of the Finno-Ugric linguistic area. Many generations of researchers both in Russia and Finland, as well as in Hungary and Estonia, have applied themselves to the collection, publication and investigation of such materials. Hence, research into Finno-Ugric mythology has a particularly good infrastructure with archives and libraries, which it pays to benefit from. The stimulation of the research tradition has been felt to be both topical and necessary. The publications on Komi, Khanty, Mansi, and Selkup mythologies in the series *Encyclopaedia of Uralic Mythologies* (Konakov et al. 2003, Kulemzin et al. 2006, Gemuev et al. 2008, Tuchkova et al. 2009) aim to invigorate Finno-Ugric mythological research. The series endeavours to examine the mythic lexicon, its central features and the historical processes of the mythic traditions of peoples in the Uralic language family on the basis of both old scientific sources and fresh, partly fieldwork-derived materials.

What are Myths?

The great theories of myth created by the German romantics and evolutionary theoreticians in the 19th century, and by many well-known researchers in the 20th, have guided the manner in which folklorists have understood the nature of myth and also identified myths of the Finno-Ugric tradition. Classical theories of myth basically present five main directions. These are:

1. Intellectual examination methods which consider myths an explanation of the world and an expression of worldview (the 19th-century evolutionists, James G. Frazer and E. B. Tylor)
2. Perspectives which emphasise mytho-poetic thought (Max Müller, Ernst Cassirer)
3. Psychological interpretations (Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung)

4. Theories which emphasise the bonds to society, among which belong the basically functionalist perspective of myths as texts of rites (Émile Durkheim and Bronislaw Malinowski)
5. Structuralist interpretations (Claude Lévi-Strauss) (cf. Cohen 1969: seven main theories)

Although classical theories of myth are sometimes represented as in opposition to one another, it is characteristic of them that they are partly overlapping and complement each other (Honko 1984: 46). Myths are in fact multidimensional and may be approached from many angles, whose appropriateness depends on the object of research and the given material (see Dundes 1984).

Myths are narratives, poetry, but not merely poetry. Mythology recounts how the world order began, and what sort of forces are behind it. It does not however contain a fully fledged religious philosophy or normative dogmatic system. Although myths deal with problems and preconditions of existence, they do not necessarily offer explanations, nor do they require explanation. In the manner of poetry, they are open to various possible interpretations. For this reason, myth and fantasy readily merge with each other. The particularity of myths lies in their ability to contain within themselves both the eternal and the transcendent, temporally bound and immediately present (see Gaster 1984: 113).

Instead of logically related concepts, mythic consciousness works in the form of metaphors and images welling up from symbolism common to cultures. Thus religious symbols and ones which express human and societal organisation generate a network of images and metaphors, which delineates a different, but nonetheless fundamental, truth (Cassirer 1946, Ricoeur 1976: 54–55, Siikala 2002a: 53–56). Mythic expression is characterised on the one hand by the persistence and long history of the fundamental symbolism, and on the other by the kaleidoscope, in perpetual motion, of images deriving their force from the implicit significance of these symbols.

Fundamental mythic images are so widespread that they have been considered universal manifestations of the workings of the psyche. Eternal and universal mythic images are, however, culturally determined and handed down within a culture. Their meanings emerge from a process of interpretation in which the symbolism of the cosmos, and the nature of the otherworld and human kind, is filtered through an individual culture, the reality subsisting within the consciousness of the community and of the person, and its flip-side, a second reality. Mythic images are based on the logic of the impossible. It is precisely in their contradiction that they are able to form world images which have proven comprehensive and thus influential. They are both ancient and continually reborn.

Today the perspectives of researchers of the mythic are more multifarious than ever. In addition to new methods of examination developed out of the five historical directions presented above, myths are approached, for example, on the basis of cognitive theory and from the perspective of gender. We may ask: how do myths depict the historical and cultural processes of their cultures and changes in the ecological environments? What do they

tell about linguistic and cultural contacts? How are they performed and interpreted in oral societies? And what do they tell of thought patterns derived from afar, and how those ways of thought are accommodated when constructing a culture in transformed social contexts? This paper will take three different but complementary methodological approaches, which can be applied on the basis of different theoretical interpretations. These are *a*) comparative research; *b*) mythic discourse in local communities; and *c*) political uses of myths.

The Elk Hunt as an Astral Myth

The Khanty and their closely related neighbours the Mansi are among the small peoples of Siberia, living to the east of the Urals along the great River Ob' and its tributaries. The Khanty and Mansi, who lived on fishing, hunting and reindeer-husbandry, have been objects of interest for linguistic and folk-poetry research since the mid-19th century. In 1888, the Hungarian linguist Bernát Munkácsi set out to research the Mansi language in Siberia. He gathered a broad collection of folk poetry, including the song depicting the hunting of the elk. Anna Widmer and Vladimir Napolskikh have translated the poem into English and German for *Mansi Mythology* along with an interpretation (see Gemuyev et al. 2008: 169–176). The song relates how a hunting trip which took place in the primordial era of the world changed the six-legged elk into a four-legged animal, a suitable prey for hunting. In the beginning of the song, the hind, which has seven calves, and the elk bull talk about a bad dream of the bull. A "beast" (hunter) is going to kill the hind. The elks escape in a storm and snow falls over a birch forest, over a pine forest, to the sacral lake at the end of the world. They pray to *Numi-Torem* and ask for help. At the end of the song, which is presented here, the "I" describing events is the hunter, who is a "real man", *Moś*-man, the heroic ancestor of the Mansi. He kills the bull and cuts off two of its legs. The bull became the Elk Star in the heavens. An explanation by the singer after the performance outlines the meaning of the myth:

Sɔ̄rp-sɔw ērʔʲ– Song of the Elk Star

*

Now the bloody-handed son of *Moś* man
to the sacral sea glittering at the end of the world
he came down.
There he was not guided by the track of his elks any more,
therefore he turned finally back.
Long he went, for a short time he went,
to that his beast, which he killed before he came.
Well so, the six-handed, six-legged beast
on thirty river sandbanks, on thirty river bends
altogether is lying: so big it is.
He cut off its two superfluous legs.

Then he says to his father *Numi Torem*:
"Turn this animal with your power into a four-handed, four-legged one!
I, the man, because I am a real man, was able to kill this beast.
With the establishment of the world of human beings' time,
with the establishment of the world of human beings' life
how will it be possible to kill it?
With this great size, which it reaches,
all your men will be always killed by it."
*
That four-legged beast with cut off legs
now was reflected up in the sky,
the *Moś* man's chasing ski-path
now was reflected up in the high.

In the times of creation of the earth the star elk was created first six-legged on this lower earth by our father *Numi-Torem*. It had two more forelegs in the middle of its belly. It was not possible for ordinary mortal people to chase it, to kill it. To chase it by the mortal people, the *Moś* [a heroic ancestor] man was prayed. *Moś* man chased it, overtook it, cut off its two superfluous legs and then said: 'In the future, with the establishment of the world of human beings' time, with the establishment of the world of human beings' life, it will be possible to kill you, four-legged. With six legs the mortal people would not be able [to kill you]'. That elk was depicted as the Elk-Star up in the sky. The *Moś* man's ski-path was also reflected in the sky. The *Moś* man's family in the house is also seen in the sky. (Gemuyev et al. 2008: 175–176.)

The myth is known to many Siberian peoples. It also belongs to the central body of myth of many Finno-Ugric peoples. The Finnish Kalevala-metre poem *Skiing Down the Elk of Hiisi* (*Hiiden hirven hiihdäntä*) recounts how a hunter prepares his skis and how he pursues the elk he is hunting to a mythic place, Hiisi (*Hiitola*) or the North (*Pohjola*). The corresponding Komi mythic narrative describes how the hero Jirkap builds his skis using his magic tree and becomes the best Komi hunter. With magic skis, he is able to pursue a blue elk on a long journey to the east, as far as the Urals. (Konakov et al. 2003: 375–376.) The myth concerns a theme of importance to people who relied for sustenance on the hunting of the elk.

The myths are astral: according to the singers, the events in them are depicted in the sky. In Sámi tradition, the constellations of Orion, the Pleiades and Arcturus belong to the cosmic elk-hunt (Pentikäinen 1995: 135). The Evenki, Kets, Selkups, Buryats, Mongols and Mari interpreted the Great Bear as an elk being hunted, along with its pursuers (cf. Harva 1938: 190–196). The Khanty regard the Milky Way as the tracks of the skis of the mythic elk-hunter, the *Moś*-man. Nikolaj Nikitič Naxračëv, of the northern Khanty, explained the matter thoroughly to me and Oleg Uljašev in the summer of 2002, pointing to the special skis needed for winter hunting:

> For us, the Milky Way is not the way of birds [its designation in Finnish], but *nimʌəŋ juš*, 'the track of the ski'. *Nimәl* means 'skis covered in the skin of a reindeer's forelegs' and *juš* is 'way'. We had a hero *Moś*-man. He was not so strong as other giants, but similar. He beat spirits and heroes. He was able to change into all sorts of beings. When he had changed into one and you looked at him, he became another. On skis he sped as though flying, and ran across the sky. The Khanty did not like smooth-surfaced skis. When you go on that sort of skis, the track is obvious and it stays visible for a week. If you go hunting with them, soon everyone will find your hunting place by the tracks. What wild animal is going to come there then? But when you go on fur skis, the track disappears quickly, the snow scatters and the track becomes unclear. It is the same with the Milky Way: there are two parts like bands and the stars are scattered like snow, unevenly and unclearly.

Astral myths, judging by their wide distribution, represent a very ancient mythological tradition. In northern Eurasia, astral myths are connected with large animals. In addition to the elk, the bear is also widely found as a mythic subject. Kolja Naxračëv's comments and the explanation for the use of skin-bottomed skis show that ancient tradition is still worth investigating and judging. We may also ask what significance these old mythic tales have in the life of modern people.

Voices of the Past: The Legacy of Comparative Research

In codifying the structures of a worldview, myths carry the thought patterns of the past. The structures of cultural consciousness which maintain the worldview and values and strive to solve conflicts within them are more deep-rooted and conservative than superficial cultural phenomena. Hence mythology belongs among those slowly changing mental representations, those "long-term prisons" (to borrow the well known expression of Fernade Braudel), which live on tenaciously even in transformed circumstances and carry the memory of the past.

As culture is renewed, old themes take on new historical forms. They are interpreted within the frame of reference of each culture in a way appropriate to the social context and contemporary world concept (Vernant 1992: 279). Thus conservatism in the central structures and even central materials, motifs and images, and also a continuously renewed interpretation of these structures and materials, are characteristic of the life of a mythology borne as a tradition from one generation to another.

Representatives of comparative research have shown that mythic materials woven into the mythic poems and narratives of the Finno-Ugric peoples, motifs depicting the birth and structure of the world and the creation of cultural phenomena, belong to a widespread international tradition (see Napolskikh, this volume). Parallels to these are found in Indo-European-speaking cultures but also further afield in Asia and America (see Eliade 1971). Interpreting what these common points tell of the mental atmosphere of pre-Christian cultures is a fascinating but difficult research

task. After abandoning the old comparative method based on evolutionary theories and concentrating on local cultures, researchers of religion again found the importance of comparative work in the 1990s. One of the inspiring works was William Paden's *Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion*, the second edition of which was published in 1994. The debate surrounding New Comparativism in the 1990s has continued into the present day, arguing not whether comparisons should be made, but how comparative study should be done (Rydving 2010: 31–33). Håkan Rydving compared Sámi and Khanty bear rituals and found that two rituals were sufficient to outline resemblances and differences (Rydving 2010: 34–43). In my work on Siberian shamanism in the 1970s, I compared most of the shamanic complexes using case analyses in which the ecology, livelihood, social structure and main cultural patterns of the people were considered. They helped to find different shamanic ritual complexes in Siberia and to understand the reasons for the variation in rite technique (Siikala 1978, 1987). However, we can also work at the level of texts. The mythology gathered from narrative motifs, mythic images, metaphors, symbols and significant concepts communicate information about cultural contacts. By means of comparative research into the mythic materials, mythic images and mythic vocabulary, it becomes possible to trace similar layers of tradition inherited from different cultural contacts in the mythic heritage. Linguists have confirmed these layers of cultural contacts through the examination of the history of native and borrowed vocabulary.

Myths of Early Uralic Hunting Cultures

Although many basic questions are still a matter of debate, for example where and in how large a region the Uralic languages were spoken at different historical stages, the common lexicon indicates quite clearly what the culture of the population groups who spoke Uralic and Finno-Ugric languages was like. As Kaisa Häkkinen (1990: 176) has shown, the common Uralic lexical fragments point to a language of a Stone Age community "living in a relatively northern region and practising hunting and fishing."

A great variety in points of detail, and a striking similarity in the fundamental structures, was characteristic of the religious traditions of the known hunting cultures of Northern Eurasia. The former derives from the oral nature of the tradition and the lack of codified doctrines; the latter relates to the similarity in systems of sustenance and living conditions, but also goes back to very ancient patterns of thought. As the cultures which spoke Uralic and Finno-Ugric languages are believed to have been northern hunting cultures, the conclusion may be drawn that the distinguishing structural features of their mythologies were connected with the demands of their nature-based lifestyle and with their observations of the revolving firmament. We may assume that the early Uralic hunting culture possessed fairly consistent mental models relating to the structure of the cosmos, the otherworld, human existence and relationships with nature, as well as shamanistic and animal-ceremonial practices.

Analogues to many of the documented cosmological images and myths of the Uralic peoples are found so widely that the tradition has been regarded as very ancient, even palaeolithic. Palaeolithic hunting cultures may in all likelihood be regarded as belonging among the cultures which spoke early Proto-Uralic (Napolskikh 1992, Ajkhenvald et al. 1989, Siikala 2002b). Overall, Uralic mythology appears to form an integrated worldview reflecting fisher/hunter mentalities and constructed on the basis of interconnected complexes of images. Among its cosmographic features are the world image centred upon the North Star, the model of the universe in which horizontal and vertical merge, the emphasis upon the north–south axis and the centrality of water courses as links between this and the other world. The north–south axis is emphasised also in the depiction of powers representing death and maintenance of life. The centrality of the (water)bird, reflecting astral mythology, is connected to the cult of the sun and the life-giver in female form, whose attribute is the birch, a variant of the world tree (Napolskikh 1992). Uralic peoples also shared an astral mythology centred upon animals and a complex concept of the soul characteristic of Eurasian hunting cultures, concepts which formed a basis for animal ceremonialism and the institution of shamanism (Siikala 2002b).

Patterns of thought which go back to the early hunting culture were best preserved in those cultures where hunting and fishing have been continuously significant as a means of sustenance. The most important break in thought patterns took place in many Finno-Ugric cultures at an early date with the move to agriculture. However, the move was so gradual and deferent to sustenance by hunting that the mythology long preserved its millennia-old materials and images.

We know that cultural contacts and dominant religions change the mythic tradition by breaking down the old and bringing in the new. However, the means by which the patterns of myth and folk belief change has been a problem for research up to the present. It is worth examining the history of the mythic tradition as a dialectic process in which cultural change and new contacts offer alternative concepts and images in the place of those which were established. The patterns of thought rooted in the past offer a conceptual framework within which new elements can be accommodated. Assimilation therefore takes place within the conscious terms set by the existing culture. This is particularly evident in the case of concepts of the higher divinities and of the realm of the dead, where alternatives presented by the stronger cultures and institutionalised religions have continuously displaced native material. The mythic images and beings in the Kalevala-meter poetry near the Baltic Sea are a good example of the fusion of Old Indo-Iranian, Baltic, Germanic, Scandinavian and Slavic ideas and beliefs, as well as the great influence of both Roman Catholic and Orthodox religions. The same trend can be seen in the amount and quality of loan words and thus in cultural histories of the Baltic area. (Siikala 2002a, 2002b; see also Anttonen, this volume, and Hakamies, this volume). A noticeable feature in mythology is the existence side by side of ideas and images which, although contradictory in their background, are effective and complementary.

The more important and deeply rooted the values, stances and beliefs

are, the more comprehensive are the cultural shifts needed to change them. The elements of religion and the mythic world picture were able to survive changing cultural systems, yet their meanings did not necessarily stay the same: motifs and images have been interpreted and formed anew as they have been accommodated to transformed contexts.

The Mythic Corpuses of Local Communities

Early comparative research separated mythic materials from their cultural and social connections. We may also approach myths as the living culture of small communities, as integrated corpuses of oral tradition. The collections of the 19th century researchers of Finno-Ugric myth began to come to life for me only when doing fieldwork with Oleg Uljašev among the Khanty in the northern Ob' region of Siberia. We heard one of the important Khanty myths on a train as we ascended the Urals in July 2004. The myth related the origin of the Khanty holy lake Num-to. It was told by a man who had ended up as our travelling companion by chance, and who wished to show that his people had an ancient and valuable culture.

As our fieldwork in the small Khanty villages in 2000–2004 concentrated on the observation of local rituals performed in secret during the Soviet era, the myths were merely an evening entertainment whose value I appreciated later. In 2002, I stayed with my folklorist colleague, Oleg Uljašev, and the Khanty Nikolaj Nikitič Naxračëv, whom we had taken to be our guide, in a forest cabin in the village of Ovolyngort on the Synja river, where our only source of light was the hearth opening. When by day we discussed matters with 76-year-old Pëtr Nikitič Longortov, who arranged the village rituals, Kolja (Nikolaj) wished to relate his own view of the origins of the world, of the birth and essential nature of animals and of the most important gods. Through the long dark evenings and the depths of the night, the men kept each other in happy company telling myths and tales. Oleg Uljašev, apart from being a folklorist, is also a writer for the Komi folklore theatre and a poet, who as a child had learnt a great host of Komi tales from his aunt. He told these during our field trips, sometimes continuing the same tale for three nights running. Kolja had heard his myths and tales from his aunt Mar'ja Semënovna Naxračëva, who was born in 1930 on the far side of the Lesser Ob', in the village of Poslovat in Kunovat.

Bear Myths

The rites related to the bear and the slaying of the bear have a part even today in the life of the Khanty. In Ovolyngort, a bear had eaten a horse in the spring and done other harm in the mushroom and berry forests. Previously, it had slashed up the holy sleigh at the village's ritual site. There was a lot of talk about bears and the ceremonies of their wakes. One evening Kolja took up the topic:

When it is said or written that *the Khanty are sprung from the bear, this is not true. It is all a lie*. The bear has always been small*, he has always been the younger brother of the Khanty. He is God's son*.

When he lived in heaven, he was still small, but he could already talk and walk. He began to vex his father. He looks down to the earth and says: "How beautiful it is down there below, *how golden everything is there*. Let me down, father!"

Father said: "Down below live people, and they hunt their food with their brows in a sweat. There *you too will have to hunt your food*. You cannot do that." But father got fed up, and he put his *son in an iron cradle and let him down on a silver chain*.

When God's little son came to earth, he saw that it was only from above that it looked beautiful, thanks to the yellow lake flowers.

He was disappointed. *He raised his head on high, but it was already too late. Father had decided, and it had been his own will too.*

Then he went to sit down and started to yell in fury. He began to look for something to eat, but did not know how to find food. Soon he was growling the whole time.

He began to walk on all fours and pick whatever he happened to come across. *He began to grow a bit hairy. He grew bigger, and became the size he is now. But although he is very large, he is all the same the younger brother of mankind, because he was little when his father let him down onto the earth*. People had already appeared, in fact.

And nowadays, when he is slain, he is really being punished for his disobedience and crimes. Can't elder brothers punish a younger one if he doesn't obey? And then they ask forgiveness [at the bear-wake] and say "It's not us, it's you who are guilty, you should have listened. *It's not us killing you, but someone with a bayonet*." A knife is called by that name, because the names of objects in ordinary life and in rituals are quite different.

The structure of myth is simple: the young bear sees the beautiful, golden land of people, and wants to go there. His father refuses, but decides to lower him down. The young bear is disappointed, but has to stay on the earth. He grows bigger and hairy, but he is still the younger brother of man. The Birth of the Bear myth belongs to astral mythology and is connected to the bear ceremonies. The bear-wake involves a multiform poetic corpus telling of the bear's origin, its sojourn on earth, the stages of its hunting and its return home. The Finns and Sámi also considered the bear to be a relative of humans, and preserved bear-wake ceremonies similar to those of the Khanty and Mansi up to the 19th century. The myth of the bear's birth, which relates how God himself lets down his son onto the earth in a cradle on a silver and gold chain is also known in Kalevala-metre poetry from the Finnic area, recited in connection with bear-wake rituals. The myth of the bear's birth was sung in Finland with another purpose, as a protective charm for cattle, as in the following example, where the bear is let down to earth in a cradle suspended from a silver chain in the manner of the Khanty myth:

Missä ohto synnytelty,
Mesikämmen kiännätelty?
Tuolla ohto synnytelty,
Mesikämmen kiännätelty:
Ylähällä taivosessa,
Otavaisen olkapäillä.
Missä se alas laskettiin?
Hihnassa alas laskettiin,
Hihnassa hopiisessa,
Kultaisessa kätkyyssä,
Sitte läks saloja samuumaan,
Pohjanmoata polokemaan.
[…]
(*SKVR* VII$_5$ 3932, 1–12.)

Where was the Bruin born
the honey-paw turned over?
There Bruin was born
the honey-paw turned over –
in the upper air
upon the Great Bear's shoulders.
Where was it let down?
In a sling it was let down
in a silver sling
a golden gradle:
then it went to roam the woods
to tread the North Land.
[…]
(Kuusi et al. 1977: 262.)

Kolja wanted to dispute the generally agreed idea that the Khanty are the offspring of the bear. The denial is even more interesting because Kolja's father belongs to the *Por*-phratry, whose forefather is held to be a bear. The Khanty are divided into two exogamous phratries, named the *Por* and the *Moś*. Kolja's mother, from whom he heard the folktales, belonged to the other phratry according to her family. She was a *Moś*-woman. According to Kolja, the bear is just a younger brother, so punishing him is possible because the bear has caused damage by coming to the earth already inhabited by people. The sentence "It is not us killing you, but someone with a bayonet" states that the hunter did not kill the bear but someone else. The same idea is found in Finnish and Sámi bear hunting tradition. The Finnish hunter might say that the bear caused the misfortune and the knife which killed him was made in Estonia or Germany. The Sámi in turn might say that hunters are "Swedish, German, English and from all countries". (Kuusi 1963, 46–47.)

Instead of a mythic theme suggesting that the bear is the ancestor of human kind, which is important in bear-wakes, in everyday discussions people were more interested in the damage bears had done. Pëtr Nikititč said that a bear is not a bear, if it is a wrong-doer. It cannot hunt well. Especially bad are bears' visits to graveyards, a common thing in the present day, but also known to have happened in olden times. Kolja Naxračëv, however, stuck to the mythic character of the bear and returned to the theme when we met with him a year later, commenting now on the myth in another way, connected to himself:

> The bear is God's son. When he lived in heaven, he looked down and saw that *everything there was golden*. So he started asking his father if he would let him down there.
>
> Father says: "Down below *you have to search out food*. You do not know how." However, he made his father so fed-up that he put his son in *an iron cradle* and let him down *on a golden chain*.
>
> When the little son of God came to earth, he saw that it looked beautiful only from above because of the yellow colours of autumn.

He lifted his head on high, but it was already too late. Father had decided, but still his thoughts turned to home.

He sat down and began to groan, greatly upset. For the bear, the most unpleasant of all things on earth were the mosquitoes; yes, and even food had to be searched out.

He began looking for food, but did not know how. He began walking on all fours and picking everything that came his way. *He began to grow a little hairy.* He was a beautiful youth, but he began to change into a wild animal. *He grew bigger until he became as big as he is now.* But *although he is large, he is still the younger brother of mankind, because he was small when his father let him down to earth*. If he was once let down in a cradle, it means he was still small.

The nutcracker (*noχr-; ete-ne* [the bird *nucifraga caryocatactes*; literally 'Siberian pine-cone-eating woman']) *is considered his elder*. Firstly, because she was already on the earth when the bear came down; secondly, because she made a lot of demands.

Among us, small people are undemanding. But those who are older grumble, they are not satisfied and impose on others.

Thirdly, he does not quarrel with the nutcracker, she howls more. They usually have quarrels with the bear. They eat the same food. She howls that the bear is eating her cones. "*Shar-shar*!" she weeps the whole time.

This time Kolja's comments are even more personal. The animal protector spirits of the clans and families are still important beings in people's lives. Sacrifices are made to them and their idols may be present on the walls of houses. Indicating his father's family, Kolja related that the goose (*Aj-lut-iki* ['White-Cheeked Rent-Goose Old Man']) is the bird of the family Naxračëv, and also the cedar tree is expressed in his family name as derived from *noχraś* ['Siberian cembra'], and which refers to "Cone-Father", from *noχr* ['cone'] and *aś* or *aśi* ['father']. Hence the last part of Kolja's tale, which concerns the relationship and quarrel between the bear and the cedar-tree-seed-eating nutcracker, is important to him. The structure of the narrative and sentences in italics show that he reproduced the most important parts of the myth nearly word for word. On the other hand, the point of the myth was now new. Instead of speaking about the special position of the bear he turns to the relationship of the bear and the nutcracker. The tiny bird is "older"; she has authority over the bear. Kolja, who has an education of schoolmaster, who is the assistant of a strong shaman in public ritual, and an exceptionally good hunter, is small in stature. Hence "among us, small people are undemanding" also points to his personal experiences.

The nutcracker eating cones of a cembra appeared in another of Naxračëv's myths:

The bear brought home with a special ritual becomes a god and protector of the house. And, since he knows the character of *his sister*, he warns her.

In the very beginning , the nutcracker was a big bird, like the wood grouse. Its flesh was white, like the hazel-grouse's. And the Khanty hunters considered it good luck to catch it and to put it on the festive table. Since it ate cedar cones [nuts], its meat was white, tasty.

And the bear's spirit feels a misfortune, you know, and warns her: "Sister, do not fly to the Sacral Cedar cape. Do not take cones from there. Indeed, you have all the forest at your disposal."

And it was just the autumn time, the season to store up the cedar cones. First, the nutcracker restrained herself, then could not stand it any longer and flew to the Sacral Cedar cape.

And again the bear's spirit said: "If you ever come, do not shell it in that place, do not fly to the village."

So she tried to shell it in a tree. It was not comfortable. So she flew with the cone over the whole village.

The people saw the nutcracker with the cone. The smartest boy shot with his bow. He did not hit her, but the nutcracker was frightened and dropped the cone.

The smartest boy came first running to the cone. Some nuts he gave to his friends, all the rest he ate himself. And then a disaster happened. At night the boy's belly was swollen and by morning he had died.

A shaman came to know why the boy died from the house's guardian spirit and ordered the bear's spirit to punish the nutcracker.

The bear's spirit said: "Well, sister, you are guilty. A human being died because of you and I must punish you. Your white flesh will become blue. Your big body will dry out. And nobody will eat your blue, dry body, not even the hungry beasts.

All the taiga dwellers will remember your hungry stomach from your mournful scream, like weeping: "*Shar-shar-shar!*" When anybody sees a nutcracker in the forest, remember my words."

Kolja told that this myth is performed by singing and telling. He heard all of his folktales from his mother Mar'ja Semënovna Naxračëva in the village of Kazym Mys. The myth describes why the nutcracker is small, although she is the older sister of the bear. In the beginning everything is fine. The nutcracker is big like a wood grouse and a tasty bird, but it breaks the rules: it flies to the Sacred Cembra peninsula and eats the cones. People shoot at it and it drops the cone, from which one of the boys became sick. The first sentence shows that this myth was sung or told in the bear-wake ceremony. After the bear is taken to home, it will be a "god" and the "protector of the house". The bear gives the right orders and the soul of the bear determines how the wrong-doing will be punished. In the course of the narrative, a shaman, the problem-solver in many Khanty myths, is consulted. Shamans know wrong-doers and the reasons of misfortunes. In this case, the shaman knows that the guilty one is the nutcracker.

In the whole process of ritually organized bear hunting, a great number of songs were performed among the Northern hunters, Khanty, Mansi and even Finns. The bear-wake was a culmination of the whole ritual process and the bear was entertained by performing songs to him. Some of the songs express the bear's view, some tell of heroes and gods. At the end of the myth, the cry of a bird is imitated as at the end of many other myths we heard in Ovolyngort. The myths of the bear presented above tell about the relationship of the animal and people. The problems concern the moral order. What is the right way to behave? Myths also explain why some animals or birds are valued and some are not.

The Heroic Tradition

The 19th-century collectors showed that the most impressive epic songs of the Northern Khanty told of their heroes. The princes of the heroic poems, the "cities", the weaponry of the warriors and so forth, point to the Yugra culture and social organisation of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, known from historical sources. The first sources to mention the Yugra princes are medieval: Novgorodians were making trading and tax trips to Yugra by the eleventh century. (Bartens 1986: 15.) The Muscovites overpowered forty Yugra cities in 1499 and imprisoned fifty princes and a thousand other inhabitants. Although the Khanty rebelled against the Muscovites thereafter, they remained subject to Moscow.

The Khanty heroic epics, poems hundreds of lines long, are "holy songs", and are performed only by men. They do not tell of warrior raids; the hero leaves on his journey for reasons of revenge and to gain himself a wife. Both Khanty and Mansi called heroic poems "songs of war, of destruction". The common expression is thought to point to the great age of the songs. The poetic figures of the epic songs, which are retained in their memory, as well as the great quantity of verses, show that they were performed only by professional singers. (Bartens 1986: 16–17.) The songs are first-person narratives: the hero speaks through the mouth of a singer. The heroes lived in a heroic age, before the time of "man, who has his navel cut". They are frequently compared, especially among the Mansi, with the deities and spirits, whose songs are likewise in the first person. The most important guest of the bear feast, the bear, also speaks through the mouth of the singer. In prose narratives, heroes and deities no longer speak through a singer, but are indicated in the third person. (Bartens 1986: 17.)

In the present day, the heroic tradition is related mostly in prose form. In 2004, we met Gennadij Pavlovič Keľčin. He recounted two heroic narratives, one of seven brothers and black *jik-ves* and another about *Tŏχləŋ-iki,* the Winged Man. Keľčin had heard the narrative in the form of a song, but knew it well. The description of heroes and their opponents is detailed as are dialogues between vivacious characters. The heroes with fine arms, and especially *Otšam-iki*, the youngest of them, are good fighters, qualified to attack monstrous opponents and even the worst of them, the mother of river snakes, which is seven river-bends long. The youngest of seven brothers is connected to *Lovən-χo* (in Synja: *Λovəŋ-χu*), he rides on a white horse, the seventh of the sons of God. His other name is *Tŏχləŋ-iki*, the Winged Man, which may also refer to mythic themes. K. F. Karjalainen mentions that in Dem'janka, the Winged Man is the helper of the God of heaven and the same as *Päi-īka*, the Old Man of Thunder and Storm. He comes to help in the form of a storm and can kill the evil spirit *Kul* with his arrow. (Karjalainen 1918: 327.) The mythic allusions show that the events of hero narratives relate to the time before ordinary men, "with cut navels". In the second narrative, the opponent is related to the hero but married to a Nenets woman. At the end of the quarrel over the hunting grounds, *Otšam-iki* slays the huge army and half the inhabitants of *Un voš* ['Big Town'].

Tales of Deities and Mythic Beings

We learned from Pëtr and Kolja that Šuryškary Khanty believed in four main deities: the Creator Lord *Num-torəm*, the Holy Mother Mistress *Jeməŋ-aŋki*, the Son of the Creator *Λovəŋ-χu* ['Man on the Horse'], and the Master of the Lower World, *Kul-iʌpi-iki* or *χiń-iki*. In addition, people honour the spirits of kin and family and local spirits. In songs and narratives, the most popular divine personage is *Lovəŋ-χo* (standardized Khanty) or *Λovəŋ-χu* (Synja dialect), literally 'man on horse', a hero who has a winged horse and who wears *naχr*, 'armour', an iron shirt. His weapon is not a sword, but a sabre. On his back he has a shawl and on his head, a cap of feathers. When he is needed, he is called, and he gallops to people's assistance on a cloud of down. According to Pëtr Nikitich, *Lovəŋ-χu* appears as different personages: he can be a small child, an unhappy orphan boy, a snotty brat. His real character is revealed in his relationship with people:

> There are, as you know, such people who offend and annoy other people. There are also people who pass such miserable cripples by. But the third one feels pity, gives his shirt, if he has nothing else to give. In folk tales, *Λovəŋ-χu* appears as he is: he punishes people for wrong deeds; he is indifferent to indifferent people; he helps people who are pitiful.

Pëtr Nikitič said that there are folktales in which *Λovəŋ-χu* beats the mean *Jalań-iki*, a cannibalistic giant, which has three, seven or nine heads. The giant cannot look down because he has a bone sticking out under his throat. *Λovəŋ-χu* turns himself into *Imi-χiʌi* ['Aunt's Nephew']. He whirls at the feet of *Jalań-iki* and then nails him to a pine. The giant comes home to his wife with a pine on his back and groans that some little boy has done wicked things to him.

Jalań-iki appears in a local myth told in Kazym Mys with *Λovəŋ-χu*. The myth relates how islands and a place called Stony Cape *(kev ńoʌ)* appeared near Kazym Mys:

> *Λovəŋ-χu* flies in the sky on his winged mare and sees a *jalań-iki*. But this fellow always does harm to people. They (*jalań*s) are few, human beings are many, therefore they are always looking for ways they can make trouble and eat people. *Jalań-iki*s are such giants; there used to be lots of them.
>
> *Λovən-χu* looks around: the *jalań-iki* is busy with something. He is wearing a linen shirt, no trousers, and is running from Kazym Cape to the Stony Belt. He comes back with the hem of his shirt filled with stones and throws them into the Ob'. Not much of the bed of the Ob' is still free.
>
> *Λovən-χu* asks: "What are you doing?"
>
> "There are plenty of people there," he says. "I want to block the Ob', so they will not be able to sail and fish." "No," says *Λovən-χu*, "my fellow, it will not go that way. You will not bother people."
>
> He struck his [the *jalań-iki*'s] head once or twice with his fist, dragged him aside to the mainland, and the *jalań-iki*'s toes carved out the two channels of the *Jalań-sojm* ['*Jalań*'s Brook'].

> And *Λovən-χu* is, you know, a god; he should probably drive him [the *jalań-iki*] away with some words, he said, so that there should be fewer destroyers of people. He drove him to the mainland, cut his body into pieces and threw them all around. From the pieces of the *jalań-iki*'s body appeared *ut puχər*, forest: cedar-tree islands among the swamps – "hands", "legs", "body". And opposite Kazym Cape, the Stony Cape appeared beside the Urals down by the middle of the Ob'.

The image of the Stony Belt refers to another myth of the Northern Khanty according to which *Num-torəm* fastened the land with his belts. From the first belt arose the iron ridge on the other side of the Ob', but the land did not hold fast. The belt of his shirt became the Urals and it chained the earth. (Karjalainen 1918: 306.) The *jalań-iki* tries to fill the Ob' with stones, but *Λovən-χu* fights with him and prevents his mischievous work. The feet of the fallen giant dig out two tributaries of the Ob'. The island is formed from the parts of his body. The motif of a body of an animal or a mythic being which is torn to pieces to form new elements of the earth is common in the Northern Khanty folktales. In a narrative collected by Wolfgang Steinitz (1939: 131–132), a little *śiśki* bird is torn to pieces. The same fate was also suffered by the hazel hen at the beginning of ages.

The forest spirit, *meŋk* (*mek*), of Khanty legends and folktales is a creature which resembles *Jalań-iki* (Steinitz 1939: 107–115). Pëtr Nikitič told two Khanty folktales in Ovolyngort in 2001. The one was about a cunning person and the other about a *kŭl'* of the forest. *Kŭl'* (standard Khanty *kul*) and a connected name *Xul* have been understood in different ways among the Khanty and Mansi. The being has been compared to the Christian devil, or seen as a Master of the Lower World, or as a bad spirit of water or woodlands. When the Lord created the earth, *Kŭl'* asked to be allowed to create animals. When God did not give him permission, he made a hole in the earth and snakes, frogs and lizards came from the hole onto the earth. *Kŭl'* also created the wolf. (Karjalainen 1918: 355–356).

Mythic Discourse

The Khanty genre system has its own features and it cannot be compared directly to European genre practices, though the Khanty have adopted some Russian folktales and recreated them according to their own taste. Epic poems telling of divine heroes and local spirits are called *ar* (*arə*) or *ar-moś* (in Synja, otherwise *ar-mońś*). In addition, narrated myths called *moś* (*mońś*), folktales (*Märchen*), are still a living tradition among the Šuryškary Khanty. Nowadays people like to tell folktales with fantasy themes and call them *skazka* [Russian '*Märchen*']. Some of them are old Khanty stories, some are variants of Russian folktales. The assimilation of Russian and Khanty narrative traditions does not only happen by selecting a Russian theme, but also by interpreting the narrative from a Russian point of view. Nikolaj Nikitič was very worried about the Russification of Khanty folklore. He sees it as his task to collect original Khanty myths and publish them, when possible. The interest in myths was the main reason for his willingness

to accompany us in the Khanty villages. He thought that he might learn more about myths from old men, whom he also met by himself. Old myths in poetic form are still found in some areas, for example in Kazym, where bear rituals are maintained. In Šuryškary, it is the shamans who know the old mythic songs, but otherwise they are told in prose form.

Because of his interest in folklore, Nikolaj Nikitič was eager to discuss myths with Pëtr Nikitič. In the house of Longortov, we talked several times about the meanings of myths. Pëtr Nikitič Longortov, at 76 years of age, was an authority on religious knowledge. He belonged to a shamanic family. When he was a child, his father Nikita and Nikita's brothers Kuz'ma and Ivan ended up in prison for practising shamanism. Kuz'ma remained in jail for thirteen years. Pëtr Nikitič was the specialist on the rites of the holy place of Ovolyngort, and he gradually revealed his knowledge in the course of three years of conversations.

The conversations demonstrated that each area has its own myths about ancestors and deities. Local myths concentrate on the deities, spirits and heroes who are valued and worshipped in the area. The astral myths and bear songs, in turn, are widely known. In the interpretations, social relationships were emphasised, and membership of a family or community, but also personal experiences and opinions. In addition to astral myths, bear rites, heroic and spirit verses, the Khanty and Mansi also sang about the lives of "those with navels cut", that is about the lives of ordinary people. These songs depicted, among other things, the turns of fate in women's lives and their difficult position in a male-dominated culture. Tales of fate, named according to the personage of the song, are still heard, and Naxračëv was happy to perform examples learned from his mother.

The poetry and narration of the Khanty and Mansi are therefore composed of subgenres, linked with each other in many ways. The intertextuality of narratives is a typical feature of Khanty tales: they cross genre boundaries and the difference between myth or folktale and fantasy is indistinct. It is encumbent on the researcher of their mythology to investigate the mythic poetry as a whole, rather than gathering separate mythological fragments as an object of investigation (cf. Siikala 1995). Edmund Leach has also presented a consideration of the myths of a small community as a corpus which forms an entity reflecting a common worldview, where the understanding of the parts demands an understanding of the whole corpus. Although mythic elements follow each other in the narrative, they contain cross-references irrespective of the course of events, and refer to each other. (Leach 1982: 5.) William G. Doty portrays the mythic corpus thus in his work *Mythography. The Study of Myths and Rituals* (2000):

> A mythological corpus consists of a usually complex network of myths that are culturally important, imaginal stories, conveying by means of metaphoric and symbolic diction, graphic imagery, and emotional conviction and participation the primal experiences, foundational accounts of aspects of the real, experienced world and humankind's roles and relative statuses within it. Mythologies may convey the political and moral values of a culture and provide systems of interpreting individual experience with a universal perspective, which may

> include the intervention of supranormal entities as well as aspects of the natural and cultural orders. Myths may be enacted or reflected in rituals, ceremonies and dramas, and they may provide materials for secondary elaboration, the constituent mythemes (mythic units) having become merely images or reference points for a subsequent story, such as folktale, historical legend, novella, or prophecy. (Doty 2000: 33–34.)

The central point of value in Doty's characterisation is the conditionality of the catalogue of features of mythologies. All features are not always present at one time on account of the cultural ties of mythological corpuses, although they may be observed repeatedly when viewed from a comparative perspective. Gregory Nagy considers the identification of mythic corpuses and research focusing on them as a reflection of the whole concept of myth. He observes that, as a corpus, myth must be read not only "vertically", on an axis of paradigmatic (metaphorical) choice, but also "horizontally", on an axis of syntagmatic (metonymic) combination (Nagy 2002: 244). I have considered the manner of reading along both the vertical and horizontal at the same time as indispensable in my investigation of the Polynesian mytho-historical tradition (Siikala 2000a: 352–353, Siikala & Siikala 2005).

The intertextual relationships of myths are equally relevant to the field of ritual poems, charms, fairy tales and heroic epic. Because myths relate the events of the formative period of the world, they present, in the manner of a heroic epic, a reflection of history, although in a different sense. They present "holy history", but the individual and social interpretations of the events differ from each other (Eliade 1984: 145–146), and myths become attached to different, even related genres. In his work *The Destiny of the Warrior* (1970), Georges Dumézil has shown how the ideological structures of Indo-European myths are established in Roman historical narratives. Myths are thus worth examining not only as stylistically pure representatives of their own genre but also as a discourse which, while carrying indications of mythicality, crosses the narrow confines of genre.

When mythic narratives are approached as a *cultural discourse*, their meaning may be analysed on all the levels of text and performance of oral tradition. For example, epic poetry may then be treated as series of narrative entities performed in known circumstances, as narrative poems, and as mythic corpuses composed of these poems. In addition to mythic motifs, firstly those questions about the world, culture and mankind which are delved into in the narratives may be set out, secondly those oppositions through which these questions are posed, and thirdly the world of symbol, metaphor and image which forms the distinguishing mark of mythic poetry and by means of which the character of the discourse is defined even in performance situations.

When mythic tradition is investigated as a *cultural practice* and as a tool of people's social action, attention is fixed on the presentation of mythic tradition, on the *habitus*, the modes adopted by singers and narrators, on the strategies and contexts of performance. For example, the singing ideal of performers of kalevalaic poetry and the singer's *habitus*, the patterns of observation, behaviour and interpretation employed in performance

situations, take different forms in different cultural areas and cultural milieux. For their part, the singing ideal and the singer's *habitus* determined the type of performance arena that was seen as best to appear in and what sort of bodily language and verbal register the singers chose for their performance of mythic poems. (Siikala 2000b.) We may ask how the mythic tradition works as a means of constructing the ego not only of the community but also of the individual, and as an interpretation of feelings and experiences.

Myths as Political Practice

We may also ask whether Finno-Ugric myths still have any meaning today. How are they accommodated within an innovative society and in political situations? By creating a connection with the unchanging and foundational events of the past, myths, like sacred rites, possess a power to unite communities and to act as a tool for national self-determination and for political interests. Myths have also had a significant role within movements seeking to create nationhood or ethnic self-awareness. On account of their nature, they have presented themselves as the symbolic capital sum of identity processes which promote nationhood (e.g. Branch & Hawkesworth 1994). An examination of the pursuit of mythology linked to the construction of European national powers gives a good point of comparison with research into present-day ethno-nationalism. In mythological research, it is also worth paying attention to those processes of tradition in which myths are employed for the construction of ethnic and national self-consciousness. In a multicultural society, mythic and ritual traditions present themselves as means for isolation, for the construction and presentation of the self. Ethno-mimesis, an imitation of an earlier traditional culture (see Cantwell 1993), characterises the struggle of small groups, such as the Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia, to stay alive.

Ethnic religion and traditions of belief, as shapers of worldview, are nestled in the deep structures of culture and have an effect upon them. The period of state-sponsored atheism did not uproot the ways of religious thought or rituals of Russia's ethnic minorities. During my fieldwork in Udmurtia, Komi and the northern Ob' region in 1991–2006, I noticed that many religious traditions thought long dead were alive and were even being revived in connection with local identity processes. For example, there are still villages in the Udmurt republic where the sacrificial groves are in use and function as stages for sacrifices performed for the promotion of means of sustenance (Šutova 2001). As in Udmurtia, so too in Mari these rites have begun to be revived across the last decade. The significance of an ethnic religion or so-called "nature religion" as a builder of national identity has given rise to a discussion among intellectuals of the areas concerned. A corresponding development may be observed in Siberia, where, for example, the traditional forms of shamanism have been revived as material for artistic expression.

The close relationship of Finno-Ugric peoples to nature, and the symbolic

value of important animals such as the elk and bear, have continued to this day in connection with new cultural contexts. Finno-Ugric peoples have, for example, been defined as the offspring of the Bear, as indicated in the name of Pekka Hakamies's work *Ison karhun jälkeläiset* ['Descendants of the Great Bear'] (1998), and in that of a broad selection of Finno-Ugric folk poetry entitled *The Great Bear* (Honko et al. 1994). Bear rites function today as identity symbols of the Khanty and Mansi (among others). They also appear to have a recognised symbolic value in modern Finland, where bear rituals have been revived in recent decades, thanks both to students and theatrical groups. The so-called ethno-futurist direction of Finno-Ugric art seeks its materials from the world of myth and adapts mythic images to address modern-day people. Representatives of every ethnos seek materials for the construction of an identity from the circles of their own tradition. A common feature of artists representing Finno-Ugric peoples is their search for roots in the region of a common northern culture, even though they might in many cases be equally sought in Indo-European cultures or in the various divisions of Christianity.

The use of myths in reinforcing the ethnic identities of Finno-Ugric peoples and in the construction of cultural self-portraits is a blatant feature of modernity, which follows contemporary trends of the globalised world. Its foundation, however, lies in the nature of myths. The power of religion, myths and rituals to form a society is not a discovery of our post-modern world, nor is it based simply on models which have proved effective in the construction of nation-states. Concepts touching upon a group's past and the nature of the world are the fundamental forms of human knowledge, traditions whose preservation for succeeding generations has been guarded by means either of specialists in memorisation or of writing.

Myths, the history and explanation of the world, unite ancestors and people of the present in the circle of one and the same experience. As Émile Durkheim has shown, repeated common rites and the myths connected with them can create a unity of the community in a greater authority time and time again; at the same time they show the ways in which the sacred which gathers the community together is manifested. Although a shared myth or rite does not signify the same thing to all those taking part, it provides a common background reference for those different experiences. (See Durkheim 1971 [1915].) Myth and ritual both unite and create a unity of defined difference. Against this background, it is possible to understand the significance of manifestations of ethnic belief-systems to many of the ethnic minorities with which they are associated. They offer one possible resource, and a powerful one, when an ethnically relevant tradition is sought, even though they may no longer function within a religious framework.

Myths in a Globalised World

The exciting side of mythic research is that myth speaks many languages at once. It never has one excusive meaning nor do its meanings remain fixed. How mythic narratives, images and metaphors are conceived in different

cultural contexts varies. The character of mythic discourse, however, defines the possibilities for the renewal of tradition and of accommodating it within new relationships (cf. Hanks 1996: 274–277). Thus the mythic tradition forms a heritage with a long history, which moreover is in a perpetual state of modification.

In this article, I have attempted to show that questions concerning people's lives in the world, the presentation of myths, their contextualisation and meanings are not in conflict with questions relating to the adaptation of tradition and its age. Only when we understand myths both as long-lived heritage and as expressions of the selfhood of poets and their communities, as multivalent poetry, can we formulate an integrated picture of the processes of mythic knowledge.

Mythic research had ideological functions in the nation-state projects of the last century. Today myths give substance to different local, ethnic or clan groups, offering metaphors and symbols in the construction of their self-consciousness. Since myths have a strong life in today's world, research into the nature of myths cannot be confined to the examination of old materials alone. Fieldwork presents opportunities for the reconstruction and recontextualisation of a mythic tradition, and for the examination of the consequent continual adaptation.

In the renewal of mythic traditions, the visibly continuing negotiation process leaves room for creative imagination. Myths are used for new purposes, as cultural materials are created, but their use is not a direct copying of the old but an absorbing of mythic materials as new and unique performances and new forms of modern art are produced. The examination of the recontextualisation of myths, a sort of meta-tradition, as an essential part of identity processes will in the future be an ever more important area of mythic research.

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Ülo Valk

Thunder and Lightning in Estonian Folklore in the Light of Vernacular Theories*

A few years ago, I received a phone call from the professor of physics of the University of Tartu, who asked me to explain the phenomenon of thunder according to old Estonian folk beliefs. He probably needed this information for an illustration in one of his lectures. I said that thunder (*pikne*), often personified as a wrathful god, chases devils and tries to strike them dead with his arrow of lightning. This old belief seemed sufficient for the freshmen in physics, who are taught to understand the material world through scientific explanations that rely on the notion of objective truth. As a matter of fact, I was offering only one explanation from the indefinite diversity of vernacular opinions. There is considerable variation in beliefs and assumptions about this *mysterium tremendum* of celestial powers that has been experienced by each and every generation throughout the millennia. This article unravels the discursive web of Estonian folklore about thunder, beginning from the late 19th century and looking back through the ages. It relies on the collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu.

Ambiguities of Expression

According to 19th century scholarship, nature and meteorological phenomena were a major source of inspiration for primitive man as a creator of myths. Some mythologists preferred to look for solar gods, but Adalbert Kuhn (1812–1881) and Wilhelm Schwartz (1821–1899) regarded thunder as the key element for understanding the symbolism of ancient deities (de Vries 1984: 31). The ancient Germanic thunder god was characterized by Schwartz as follows:

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> Donar was believed to be a gigantic, demonic being, moving through the clouds, urging his thunderous steed around the sky in the wild commotion of the storm. The flash of lightning that shot underneath the clouds was believed to be the flash of his eye, which was shaded by the clouds as by a hat. But the flash of lightning could, at the same time, be a spear hurled from the heights, or a gleaming sword. (Quoted in de Vries 1984: 32–33.)

This short passage is a good example of the mythic discourse in 19th century scholarship. Like the Romantic poets who glorified the beauty of nature, nature mythologists employed a high literary style with vivid poetic images to express the glorious power of ancient deities and to reconstruct and revive the pre-Christian heritage. As regards the prevalent theories about myths during the 19th century, they were generally presumed to have been intended as explanatory, which has been called the oldest myth about myths (Goodman 1993: 58). Myths are certainly not pre-scientific quests for objective knowledge. In addition, it would be unwise to assume that any folklore genre could be mono-functional, or that myths are first and foremost etiological stories. Nonetheless, it is hard to overlook the numerous beliefs in Estonian folklore that offer explanations for the phenomenon of thunder. There is no uniformity in these vernacular theories, but many of them follow similar patterns of thought, express the same attitudes and share distinctive features which associate them with particular genres.

One of the achievements of international folkloristics is its elaborate genre theory, developed by research schools with different agendas. As categories of classification and designations of belonging, genres have been useful in the arrangement of material in folklore archives and in the preparation of major publications of folktales, legends, proverbs, riddles and other forms of folklore. There is also a school of folkloristics which de-essentialises genre and discusses it as an expressive practice, as "a speech style oriented to the production and reception of a particular kind of text" (Bauman 2004: 3–4) and "a strategy of reproduction" (Siikala 2008: 40–42). In discourse studies, genres have been interpreted functionally as verbal and textual resources of discourse communities (Solin 2006). Viewed from these perspectives, texts do not belong to genres, but are produced in performances according to generic patterns that have been shaped by tradition. Jacques Derrida has expressed a hypothesis about the omnipresence of genres: "a text cannot belong to no genre, it cannot be without or less a genre. Every text participates in one or several genres, there is no genreless text; there is always a genre and genres, yet such participation never amounts to belonging" (Derrida 2000: 230). Genre is thus a universal dimension of textuality as "a set of conventional and highly organised constraints on the production and interpretation of meaning" (Frow 2006: 10).

The current article proceeds from this dynamic and open-ended understanding of genres as expressive potentials and factors of textual creativity. Lauri Honko (1989: 17) has noted that in living traditions, genres seldom appear in pure form, but are incomplete and tend to get mixed together. It is tempting to view informal folkloric sayings about thunder and

lightning as myths or their fragments, but this would be misleading. As these textual pieces render great cosmic conflicts and essential laws of nature, they do however manifest mythic features and can be seen as expressions of mythic discourse. In addition, the narrativised opposition between the sky god and the devil evokes associations with the mythic tradition of dualistic creation stories which are widely spread in international folklore (see Lixfeld 1971). At the same time, folklore about thunder has strong legendary qualities because it discusses the relationship of man with supernatural powers and his vulnerable position in relation to those powers. The textual corpus of Estonian folklore about thunder is rather coherent, as regards the contents, but this consistency gets dispersed across a variety of modes of expression, both verbal and non-verbal. The tremendous meaning-potential of thunder as a natural and mythic phenomenon has been actualized in a folkloric tradition with distinct identity, which is recognizable across genres.[1] Folklore texts about thunder thus appear as generic playgrounds. The researcher can unravel their mythic, legendary and jocular traits or study the pragmatics of these texts, but should nevertheless distinguish genres from generic expressions.

However, genre is far from being the only constraint in the textualization of folklore. We can note many other factors that shape performances and texts, such as personal idiolects, educational backgrounds, social roles, life experiences, dominant discourses and audiences with their expectations. Collectors with their academic authority have played a crucial role in producing manuscripts of folklore. Their questions, concepts of authenticity and value attributions to certain genres have all shaped the documents to be preserved in folklore archives, yet collectors are not independent in their intentions and textual production, which depend on social expectations and dominant discourses – systems of views, assumptions and arguments about distinctive fields of reality. As will be seen from the following discussion, in Estonia, the phenomenon of thunder has been interpreted in a variety of discourses, both vernacular and "enlightened". Sometimes these discourses blend, but sometimes they also collide as exclusive truths that do not acknowledge alternative opinions.

What Causes Thunder?

We are living in a dynamic world, and it is possible to observe that, in both the material and mental spheres, radical changes are able to occur within a few decades. The more stable environment of former peasant cultures supported persistent forms of folklore that were transmitted through history and passed from village to village. The social, religious and ideological setting had its impact on the meanings, vernacular interpretations and variations in folklore, but in some cases we can assume the oral transmission of texts and ideas over millennia. Long-lasting place-lore relies on tangible and constant objects of a landscape, such as hills, valleys, boulders and bodies of water, and continuous habitation in human settlements. In addition, memorable natural phenomena, which recur from time to time – such as the northern

lights, whirlwinds, rainbows and thunder – support the actualization and transmission of concomitant folklore. Certain utterances and narratives of belief are periodically evoked by these phenomena, which are recurrent enough to stabilize the oral tradition.

It is a widely spread international belief that Thunder is a celestial deity who destroys evil powers. According to Khanty folklore, the god *Torəm* gallops on his horse and shoots evil spirits with a bow, causing thunderstorms (Kulemzin et al. 2006: 61). Mansis say that the thunder god *śaxəl-tōrəm* is a celestial rider, the lashes of his whip causing lightning. He uses fire-weapons to kill evil creatures that are hostile to human beings (Lyutsidarskaya 2008: 130). According to Komi belief, *Il'l'a-prorok* ['Saint Elijah'][2] punishes evil spirits who hide themselves under trees. If lightning strikes a house, the fire has to be extinguished not with water but with milk and milky substitutes. (Konakov & Ulyashev 2003: 97.) In Mari folklore, the thunder god *Küdyrtšö jumo* rides across the skies in his chariot and chases the devil (*iya*), who tries to hide himself underground, inside trees, behind human beings, in their hair, in mirrors or by flying into chimneys (Toidybek 1998: 31). Slavic peoples have shared the belief that God, St Elijah or some other celestial being uses lightning to destroy devils, which hide themselves in water or under trees and stones. It is therefore forbidden to take shelter under trees or in water during thunderstorms. Doors, windows and stove valves are closed and other taboos are followed. (Tolstaya 1995: 151–152.) In Baltic and Slavic languages, the name of the thunder god refers to him as a striker but is also etymologically connected with the words denoting oak – a tree which is frequently struck by lightning (Mallory & Adams 1997: 582–583). The core belief about thunder destroying evil powers is also spread among the Germanic and Baltic peoples; it goes back to the oldest layers of Balto-Finnic mythology and is closely connected with Germanic and Indo-European myths (Valk 1996). Some myths about thunder, such as the story about the theft of his instrument or weapon can be characterized as traditions of Circum-Baltic mythology (Frog 2011). In the Estonian language, several names of thunder refer to him as an old man (*kõu*, *äike*, *uku*, *vanaisa*, *vanamees*, *vanem*), resembling those of a dead ancestor (Loorits 1951: 6–10; Paulson 1971: 126). In the beginning of the 1820s, in his commentaries to the German translation of Christfrid Ganander's *Mythologia Fennica*, the young Estonian intellectual Kristjan Jaak Peterson (1801–1822) wrote:

> Estonians imagined thunder as an old, serious and strict man who took fatherly care of his children. When it thundered, it was said *wanna issa wäljas, wanna issa hüab* ['grandfather is out, grandfather is shouting'] – the old man is walking in the fields and shouting with his powerful voice. Usually he was then chasing evil spirits and if he found one, either in a house, in a tree or in a cliff, he flashed a vengeful beam and destroyed the hiding place of the evil one. Therefore, when thunder was heard, doors and windows were closed to prevent spirits, whom he was chasing, from entering the homes of people. (Laugaste 1963: 128–129.)

The weapons of thunder that he used for destroying evil spirits were imagined as stones (*kõuekivi*), balls (*kõuekuul*) and arrows (*kõue-, välgunool*) (Vanatoa 1985: 54). There are several hundred words and poetic expressions for referring to the chthonic opponents of thunder in the Estonian language. This results from attempts to avoid saying the name of the devil, which might provoke him to appear, by using synonyms instead.[3] The number of evil spirits in folk belief is indefinite, although the concept of Satan as the main adversary of God and humans has given a Christian overtone to these beliefs. The aim of this article is neither to look for the origin of this mythic motif nor to give a thorough survey of Estonian beliefs about thunder, but to study the discursive dynamics and hybridity of Estonian folklore during the 19th and 20th centuries. Belief about thunder destroying evil spirits manifests great expressive diversity:

> Need kivid, mis lõhki on läinud, olla pikne sellepärast lõhki põrutanud, et kurjavaimu tahtis ära hukata. 9 sülda maa ja vee ala ei pea pikne kurjavaimu enam kätte saama. Sellepärast olla vanasarvikul kui vanema tüminat kuuleb, imelik põgenemise tuhing. Mitu kord olla nähtud, kuda enne hoone põlema löömist must siga, kukk ehk kass ehk mõni muu elukas (arvalt leitava karvaga) suure tuhingaga hoone ala põgenes ja pääle see pikne hoone põlema paugutas. Pikse tuld ei pea muuga võima ära kustuda, kui üksnes rõõsa piimaga. (EKS 4 ° 3, 326 (72) < Helme (1875).)[4]
>
> Broken stones have been demolished by thunder (*pikne*) who wants to destroy an evil spirit (*kurivaim*). Nine fathoms under the ground or underwater, thunder cannot catch the evil spirit. Therefore, if the old horned fellow (*vanasarvik*) hears the rumble of thunder, he gets in a strange hurry. People have seen several times how a black hog, cock or some other creature (with a rare colour) has fled under a building and then lightning has struck it and set it on fire. The fire of thunder can only be extinguished with fresh milk.

> Kord olla nähtud, kuida enne pikse pilve üks suur kera maad mööda veerenud ja ühe kivi alla läinud; varssi tulnud pikse pilv ligemale ja löönud kivi kõige keraga surnuks. Ka kuuldud sääl häält mis ütelnud: Ma olen sind kaks sada penikoormat taga ajanud aga nüüd sind kord ometi kätte saanud. (H IV 3, 785 (7) < Puhja (1888).)
>
> One day before it started to thunder, somebody saw a big ball that was rolling on the ground and disappeared under a stone. A thundercloud soon came closer and demolished the stone and the ball. A voice was heard saying: 'I have been chasing you two hundred miles (*penikoorem*) and finally caught you.'

In many archival recordings, places and witnesses have not been mentioned, probably because there is nothing unusual about the expressed ideas and there is no need to convince anyone by providing concrete factual data about personal experiences. However, the same stock of beliefs, belonging to common knowledge, has also generated memorates and legends, sometimes confirmed by real witnesses:

Kord olnud minu isa jutustuse järele põhja poolt Emajõge Kastre asundusest, üks mees ja naene heinal, nime ei mäleta. Pikse vihma hakanud sadama, ja nad läenud vene alla vihma varju, pikne kärkinud kõvasti, et nad peaks vene alt välja tulema, ja kui nad siis sellest aru saades välja tulid, siis tundis naene et tal sülest midagi maha kukkus, mida ta küll ei näenud, kuid kes siis vana juudas olema pidi. (RKM II 100, 94 < Võnnu (1960).)

My father told me that this happened somewhere north of the Emajõgi River to a man and a woman from the Kastre village. I can't remember their names. There was a thunderstorm and they were hiding themselves under a boat. Thunder roared at them to get them to climb out from under the boat. When they understood this and came out, the women felt that she dropped something from her lap. She couldn't see it, but this had to be the old fiend (*vana juudas*).

Kõrd viinu vanapagan tüdarlatse karja mant ärä. Jumal nännu ärä ja saaten piksepilve järgi. Küll välgu akanu sähvmä iki vanapagana pihta. Sis tükkin vanapagan kivi alla, aga välgu iki järgi. Siis viinu vanapagan (tüdärlatse) karjalatse jõe ääre ja juusken isi jõkke sissi, tükken vii alla, sis ei ole välgu änämp tedä kätte saanu. Mudu oles ta karjalatse ärä põrgu viinu. (ERA II 58, 621 (4) < Halliste (1933).)

Once, Old Nick (*vanapagan*) carried a girl away from her cattle. God (*jumal*) saw this and sent a thundercloud to follow them. Lightning flashed, hitting Old Nick. Then he hid himself under a stone but the lightning followed. Then Old Nick carried the herding child to the river and rushed into the water, where the lightning couldn't reach him. Otherwise he would have carried the herding child to hell.

The above stories narrativize several beliefs about the devil, thunder, their relationship and the position of man between good and evil powers. The first legend illustrates the old fear that, in order to escape from thunder, the devil tries to find shelter near human beings, very often under a woman's skirt. (The popularity of this motif can be interpreted within the context of Christian ideas that associate female sexuality, sin and evil.) In the first legend, there is no logical explanation for why the devil did not hide safely in the river. It seems that here, the factual core of a true experience story, indicating a real place, outweighs its contradiction with dominant beliefs about water as the home environment of the devil. The second legend expresses the belief that the devil can snatch children. In Estonian folklore, unbaptised babies in particular were in danger from the Evil One, who could steal them and exchange them for a wooden replica, but no one was completely safe from demonic assaults. Here, Thunder is subordinate to the God of Christianity whose watchful compassion saves the girl. The next story demonstrates the diversity of vernacular ideas about the devil, including the devil as a thankful and helpful creature:

> Karjapoiss tyknu' kallu pyidmä jõõ veerde. Vanamees valgõ kaskaga jõõ veeren makas. Poiss aab yles, et myristämise vihm tulõ. Vanamees tennäb ja kargab vette. Ytleb, et kui kroonu pääle läät, sis tuleda' minnu meelde – Poisil kroonu pääl väegä halv. Saanu' alati pessä'. Mõtelnu' vanamehe peale. Tullu' vanatont, pandnu õlõkoo ette, sedä sis pessetu kui tsinganu'. Perästki ollu kah alati poisilõ abis ja toes. (ERA II 56, 137 (40) < Rõuge (1932).)
>
> A herding boy was fishing near the river. An old man in a white fur coat was sleeping there. The boy woke him up because a thunderstorm was coming. The old man thanked him and jumped into the water. He said, when you go to the army, remember me. The boy had a very hard life in the army. He was constantly beaten. He thought about the old man. Old Bad Boy (*vanatont*) came and protected him with a sack of straw, which was beaten. He helped and supported the boy later too.

We can see that beliefs about thunder's opposition to the devil have been narrativized in different genres, including humorous stories. International folktales "The ogre asks the man to tell him when it thunders" (AT 1148A) and "The ogre steals the thunder's instrument" (AT 1148B) are both represented in Estonian folklore. Some collectors have tried to decorate folklore with literary motifs by introducing imaginary deities of Estonian heathendom that were introduced in the 19th century. The sky god *Taara* (= Scand. Thor) in the following example belonged to literary discourse, but motifs about him became folklorized to some extent.

> Kevade pitksevihma oo käimistel üeldi: 'Vana Taara lätt randa.' Sügespoole suve: 'Vana Taara valmist villa.' Kui äkki müristab: 'Vana Taara tõreles.' (EKnS, Weske M 28 < Kolga-Jaani (1879 ?).)
>
> When it thundered in spring, it was said: 'Old Taara goes to the shore.' In late summer: 'Old Taara prepares wool.' When it thunders suddenly: 'Old Taara is scolding.'

Beliefs and poetic metaphors about thunder have been integrated into the worldview of vernacular Christianity. Many Estonians said that thunder is caused by the prophet Elijah who rides in his chariot.[5] According to the Bible, Elijah finally departed this world in a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire that carried him away (2 Kings 2). Elijah's connection with fire and rain is supported by the passage in the Bible where he is confronted with the prophets of Baal and has to prove the power of Yahweh (1 Kings 18). Elijah prepares an altar to Yahweh and asks him to accept his sacrifice. With his prayer, the fire of the Lord falls and burns up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil. Next Elijah appeals to the Lord to evoke heavy rain, and the sky grows black with clouds and a wind rises (1 Kings 18:45). These passages in the Holy Scripture support Elijah's role as causer of thunder known in different parts of Estonia:

Müristamise ajal sõidab prohvet Elijas taevas raud vankrega. (H II 26, 133 (2) < Viljandi (1888).)

When it thunders, this is Prophet Elijah (*Elijas*) who rides in the sky in his iron chariot.

Müristaja olevat püha Ilja, kes ka pilvi seeh tulitside ratastega sõitvat, nink tulitse roosaga (välguga) kurje inemisi nuhklevat. (H II 63, 463 (7) < Setu, Vastseliina (1900).)

St Ilyah (*Ilja*) is the thunderer who drives in the midst of the clouds on fiery wheels. He punishes evil people with his fiery whip (lightning).

Elias pidi tulise vankriga taevas sõitma, kui myristas. (ERA II 16, 215 (79) < Karuse (1929).)

When it thunders, it is said that Elijah (*Elias*) drives in a fiery chariot.

In many recordings, thunder appears as the manifestation of the God of Christianity. The number of belief statements representing this Christian point of view seems surprisingly high if we consider the particular interest of folklore collectors in documenting "ancient" folk belief and disregard for vernacular Christianity as a recent tradition with little value:

Piksest usutasse, et kaks inglid taevas pasunad aavad; sest müristamine laguneb enamasti ikke kahele poole külge laiali. Viimsel pääval puhuma aga kaksteistkümme inglit korraga, siis olema müristamine nii raske, et taevas ja mua kokku põruvad ja purust lähevad. (H II 27, 68 (4) < Kursi (1895).)

It is believed that two angels blow trumpets during a thunderstorm as thunder usually spreads into two directions. On Doomsday, twelve angels blow trumpets together, the thunder will be so heavy then that heaven and earth will collide and break apart.

Siis heidavad vanad inimesed ka 'ristikese' ette ja ütlevad 'Jumal Issa Pojuke, Püha Vaimuke', kui müristamise ajal vahel õige hele ja kangeste vingerdav pikse nool maha lööb, mille juures nad veel seda salmi loevad ehk laulavad: 'Ma vaene muld, kes pattu teinud, Siin seisan Jumal sinu ees!' (H I 9, 937 (176) < ? (1896).

Sometimes when it thunders and bright zigzag lightning strikes the earth, elderly people cross themselves and say 'Dear Father, Son, Holy Ghost'. They also sing the following verses: 'I am poor dust, a sinner; here I stand before you, God!'

Kui on äike, siis olevat Jumal rahva suure patu pääle vihane. (E 83969/ 70 (6) < Urvaste (1933).)

When it thunders, this means that God is angry with people because of their great sins.

Jutustaja ema kõnelend, et ühel suvel, kui väga palju müristand, siis inimesed sel puhul palund jumalat ja ütelnud: Jehoova! Jehoova! (ERA II 12, 197 (78) < Simuna (1928/1929).)

The informant's mother had said that once during a summer when it thundered a lot, people prayed to God and said: Yehowah! Yehowah!

Välk olla pühakirja järele nimetud ära sööja tuli, mida Jumal inimestelaste karistamiseks maa pääle saata, et seega neile viimist kohtu päeva meele tuletada. (H I 2, 501 (9) < Puhja (1888).)

The Holy Scripture says that lightning is a consuming fire (*ärasööja tuli*), sent by God to earth to punish people and remind them of the last judgement day.

The above beliefs of vernacular Christianity imply that the material environment responds to man's behaviour and that natural occurrences such as thunder and lightning have moral significance (Thomas 1971: 103–104). These natural phenomena do not exist independently from man but are provoked by humans. Thunder is a demonstration of God's wrath and a moral message to Christians who fail to live faultlessly:

Kui inimene liiga vannub või needib, siis tuleb see talle tagasi – minu pikne lõi maha. Et petsin, andsin, müüsin sõbrale põrsa, see kooli ära, mina unustasin raha andmata tagasi. (RKM II 396, 6/7 < Võnnu (1986).)

If a man swears or curses too much, this comes back on him. I was struck by lightning because I cheated my friend. I sold him a piglet that died but I forgot to return him the money.

Images of the wrathful thundering God have been used widely in folk pedagogy to compel children into obedience:

Müristamisest üteldakse: 'Jumal müristab' ja 'taevataat kolistab'; lapsed ja lastele ka: 'Jumal tapleb!' Lapsi irmutatakse 'Ära tie seda (pahandust), Jumal viskab kiviga pähä!' (H II 46, 441/2 (69) < Rakvere (1892).)

It is said of thunder that 'God is rumbling' and 'the old father is rattling in the heavens;' to children it is said: 'God is quarrelling!' Children are frightened with: 'Don't be mischievous; God will throw a stone at your head!'

Taivaisa müristab, viskab kirvega pähä pahadele lastele. (Nõnda hirmutati lapsi veel 50 aastat tagasi. Kui müristama hakkas, siis pugesime kapi taha, 'sängi' alle. Öösel, kui müristas, siis aeti kõik pere jalule ja istuti rüsinas, pimedas nurgas.) (RKM II 200, 348 (159) < Lüganuse (1960/65).)

Fifty years ago, children were still frightened with: the heavenly father (*taivaisa*) thunders and strikes the heads of bad children with his thunderbolt (*kirves* [lit. 'axe']). When it thundered, we hid ourselves behind the cupboard and under

> the bed. When it thundered at night, the whole family woke up and we sat close together in a dark corner.

The next recording is one of those fragmentary statements that leave us without a clue regarding the situation or by whom it might have been uttered. What is the modality and emotional attitude behind these words? Is it a joke or an anxious saying carried by pious fear of a wrathful, jealous and punishing God? In some cases, we must admit archival records conceal more than they reveal:

> Myristab ja välku lööb; Jeesuke lööb kõik surnuks, paneb põlema. (ERA II 14, 516 (32) < Kodavere (1929).)
>
> When it thunders and there is lightning: dear Jesus (*Jeesuke*) strikes all dead and sets [all] on fire.

Obviously, Christian discourse about thunder continues the earlier beliefs about a fundamental opposition between the celestial deity and his chthonic adversary. In a Lutheran worldview, there is no great difference between beliefs about the Devil as the target of lightning and sinful humans who trigger God's wrath. On the other hand, there was a wide-spread vernacular discourse that explained thunder through natural causes, such as a collision of hot and cold air:

> Müristamise ajal võitlevad soe ja külm. Kui kärgatus käib, siis on mehed just rinnuli koos. Ja kui müristamine möödas on, siis kui ilm soojaks läheb, on soe lahingu võitnud, on aga külm võitnud, siis läheb ilm peale müristamist külmale. Arvamus praegu kadumas. (ERA II 169, 30/ 31 (27) < Vändra (1937).)
>
> Thunder is caused by a fight between warmth and cold. When thunder rumbles, these men are wrestling. If the thunder passes and it gets warm, warmth has won the battle. If cold wins, however, the weather turns chilly after the thunder. This opinion is disappearing nowadays.

> Palab ja külm lähvad vastamisi, teevad pikse. Külm ja palab siis raksatavad, nad ei salli teineteist. (ERA II 27, 312 (28) < Nissi (1930).)
>
> If hot and cold go against each other, this causes thunder. Cold and hot quarrel, they dislike each other.

In the texts just quoted, we find the old tendency to personify and even anthropomorphize thunder by employing poetic images of natural phenomena. We cannot find religious awe and traces of a Christian worldview in these texts, where the naturalistic explanations of thunder prevail:

Müristamene on, et kaks pilverünka lähvad vastamesi, et siis tuleb müristamene. (ERA II 27, 235/6 (54) < Nissi (1930).)

When two clouds collide, this causes thunder.

Kui müristab, siis löövad taevas ja maa vastamisi, sest tulebged see mürin. (H II 41, 183 (20) < Ridala (1888).)

When it thunders, sky and earth hit each other, this causes the thunder.

Välgu löömist arvatakse välku taeva ruumiks, et pikse aal lõhkeda nii pilved et veikest servakest ajuti nähtavale tuleb; kõik taevas olla nii hele. (H II 59, 744 (2) < Äksi (1899).)

When lightning strikes, this is thought to be the celestial realm – when it thunders, the clouds are split and a little strip becomes visible. The whole sky is believed to be that bright.

Mürina ei maksa karta, sie on looduse asi. (Ütles isa ja keeras teise külje kui ühel öösel nõnda kõvast müristas, et aknaklaasid põrisesid, 1916. a.) (RKM II 200, 349 (161) < Lüganuse (1960/65).)

There is no need to be afraid of thunder, it's a thing of nature. (That's what father said and slept through it when it thundered so heavily one night that the panes of glass in the windows were trembling. This happened in 1916.)

As we have noted above, vernacular theories about the phenomenon of thunder vary to a great extent. Parallel to the mythic discourse about the powerful Sky God chasing the devil, we can find the moral discourse of Lutheran religion about sin and punishment, and thirdly a strong tendency to look for the natural causes of thunder. As a fourth outlook, in the Estonian Folklore Archives, there is a considerable number of playful and joking records which contradict the pious discourse about thunder as a manifestation of divine powers:

Kui kõvasti müristab, öeldakse: Vana Jumal on kodust ära läinud, poisid müravad. (E 8 ° 12, 5 (5) < Räpina (1932/1933).)

If it thunders heavily, it is said: Old God has left home, the boys are having fun.

Kui müristab, siis öeldakse et vanataat koorib kartuleid ja pillub neid pange. (E 83863 (4) < Tartu (1933).)

When it thunders, it is said that Old Father is peeling potatoes and throws them into a pail.

> Müristamise ajal peksab Pikse Peeter nuiaga vastu katla põhja. (ERA II 9, 203 (16) < Ridala (1928).)
>
> During thunderstorms, Peter the Thunderer (*Pikse Peeter*) is beating the bottom of a kettle with a club.

> ---müristab (---) Naljapärast praegu öeldavat: poisid mängivad taevas jalgpalli – löövad palli (ERA II 1 729 (28) < Emmaste (1928).)
>
> These days during thunderstorms, it is said jokingly: boys are playing football in sky.

This humorous modality can also be observed in international folklore about thunder. In Bohemia, it was said during thunderstorms that saints are throwing their bowling balls; among the Sorbians, there was a saying that St Peter has left home and boys are throwing their bowling balls (Stegemann 1930: 313). Such mundane and amusing comments regarding serious matters of belief have sometimes been interpreted as a recent development of modern times, when religious thinking is considered to have declined. However, the generative power of folklore has always offered alternatives to dominant discourses, beliefs and attitudes in the society. Clergymen appear as unselfish heroes in many supernatural legends, where they save peasants from the powers of evil; at the same time, they are the butt of numerous jokes, ridiculing their greed, lust and wickedness. While the Lord's Prayer became the universal text in vernacular religion and there was no doubt about its sacredness and magic efficiency, we also find a vibrant tradition of parodies of it. Thunder did not evoke awe and pious fear only; it also inspired witty sayings and jokes. I remember from my own early childhood the nursery rhyme that was recited during thunderstorms: *Kui müristab ja välku lööb, siis vanapagan silku sööb* ['When it thunders and lightning strikes, then Old Nick eats small herring']. This saying, also found in the Estonian Folklore Archives, probably derives from old beliefs that the devil goes into hiding in bodies of water. We can note the generic diversity of folkloric expressive forms which have been actualised when it thunders. The mythic, moral, naturalistic, literary and humorous discourses do not exhaust the variety of vernacular theorizing. We can also note a strong belief in humans' ability to control thunder and lightning through actions and the concomitant verbal tradition which might be called magic discourse. Thus, during the Easter holidays and on St Georges' Day (April 23), noisy works and entertainments were avoided in order to reduce thunder and escape lightning in the summertime (Hiiemäe 1981: 150). Many customs and belief utterances, discussed below, also express belief in controlling lightning through magical actions.

How to Escape Lightning?

There are hundreds of records in the Estonian Folklore Archives about appropriate behaviour during thunderstorms. These rules for saving human

lives and homes have a strong pragmatic orientation, but they also express vernacular theories about the causes of thunder. However, humorous modality and jokes are generally avoided in these pieces of advice. Many taboos and observances are connected with beliefs about thunder chasing a devil that is looking for a place to hide. Taking shelter next to the devil was dangerous, just like offending God:

> Kui müristab siis ei tohi mitte vanduda. Kes seda teeb selle lööb Jumal välgu läbi surnuks. (H II 50, 732 (12) < Äksi (1894).)
>
> When it thunders, it is forbidden to swear. One who swears is struck dead by God with lightning.

> Kui pikne peakohas paugub, pidavat issameie ära lugema – ei löövat külge. (EKnS 31, 25 (25) < Kolga-Jaani (1912).)
>
> If there is a heavy thunder above you, you should read the Lord's Prayer – then lightning will not strike you.

> Kui pikse müristamise ajal kuuse ala läät, - lõika rist kuuse pääle, sis ei löö pikne puu külge. Rist ei lase vanal kurjal ka kuuse ala tulla, keda pikne jo alati lüvva tahtvat. (H I 6, 610 (156) < Vastseliina (1895).)
>
> If you hide yourself under a spruce tree during a thunderstorm, cut a cross on the tree. The cross forbids the evil one (*vanakuri*) from coming under the spruce. Lightning always wants to strike him.

> Kui piksesadu oli, siis ei tohtind puu all seista. Pihelga all seista tohib, kadaka all koa tohib seista, nende marjadel on ristid otsas. (ERA II 27, 355/6 (23) < Nissi (1930).)
>
> During a thunderstorm, it was forbidden to stand under a tree. However, one can stand under a rowan tree and a juniper, because their berries have crosses.

> Müristamise ajal ei tohtiv tühja nõud käe otsa võtta, tont minevat sinna sissi ja välk löövat selle pääle. (H II 49, 128 (25) < Tarvastu (1894).)
>
> It is forbidden to carry an empty vessel when it thunders. A demon (*tont*) can enter it and it will be hit by lightning.

> Ka jooksta ei tohi mitte müristamise ajal. Kurivaim piab selle inimesega ühes jooksma ja Jumal kurja taga ajama ja kõige inimesega maha lööma! (H II 65, 305 < Koeru (1900).)
>
> It is forbidden to run during thunderstorms. An evil spirit will run along with this person, God is chasing the evil one and will strike him dead together with the human being!

> Müristamise aegus ei tohi jooksta. Tehtavad seda, siis lüüa Jumal jooksja raudkepiga maha. (E 37345 (3) < Pärnu (1898).)
>
> During thunderstorms, it is forbidden to run. If one runs, God will strike him dead with his iron stick.

> Ka kõik uksed ja augud pandi pikse aeal kinni, et kurivaim sisse ei saa. Aga piibliga võis puu alla minna, siis kuri ei julgund järele tulla. Kui uksed kinni pandi, siis akati kohe jumalasõna laule laulma, siis kurivaim kuulis lauluhäält ja ei julgnud sisse tulla. (ERA II 188, 248 (83) < Lääne-Nigula (1938).)
>
> All doors and holes were closed when it is thundering so as not to let an evil spirit enter. But if you had a Bible, you could stand under a tree, because the evil one (*kuri*) would be afraid to approach you. When the doors were closed, people started to sing hymns of the Word of God, then the evil spirit heard the singers' voiced and wouldn't dare enter.

> Öeldakse, et õues ei või olla pikse ajal, puu all ei tohi seista, lööb noole pähe, puud ta tahab ikka lõhkuda; aknaid ei tohi lahti teha; õhk tõmmab läbi. Joosta ei tohi, et siis riided võtavad seda õhku külge. Öeldakse veel, et koera ega kassi ei tohi ligi lasta. Kurat kardab pikset, et siis pugeb koerasse varjule, siis pikne lööb koera maha, ja kui koer on toas, siis lööb maja põlema. (ERA II 37, 222/ 3 (17) < Jõhvi (1931).)
>
> It is said that you should stay indoors when it is thundering, you shouldn't stand under a tree because the lightning that wants to destroy the tree will hit your head; you shouldn't open the windows, because this will make the air move. You shouldn't run, because your clothes will attract this air. It's also said that you should stay away from dogs and cats. The devil is afraid of thunder and hides inside dogs. Then thunder strikes the dog dead, and if this happens indoors, the house will be set on fire.

The texts above prescribe rules of behaviour in order to avoid tragic accidents. The Word of God and Christian symbolic means of defence, such as the Lord's Prayer and the sign of the cross, were apparently believed to have extraordinary power. If thunder and lightning are the functions of the Heavenly Father, it seems contradictory that such prophylactic devices of Christianity had to be used in order to save oneself. The archaic notion that thunder is chasing evil spirits provides an appropriate solution to this paradox. The opposition between thunder and the devil is a basic belief that explains the rules of behaviour to be followed:

> Endisel ajal, kui alles noor olin, nägin oma silmaga, kui vanad isad ja emad heinamaal piksevihma ajal viskasid vikatid, ja kerve ja vikati lõikuse noa taskust endast eemale maa pääle terad ülespoole. Minu küsimise pääle, miks nii teete, siis vastasivad, et vana kurat kardab pikse noolesid, jookseb rutuga ees. Ehmatanud olles, et mõni piksenool võib ehk teda tabada, astub siis hirmunud olles kogemata mõne terariista pääle, haavab enda jalga ehk koguni veel mõne

jala otsast äragi, siis ta ei sa enam nii mööda maad ümber kolada ja inimeisi kiusata. (ERA I 2, 134 (12) < Laiuse (1929).)

In the old days when I was young, I witnessed how old fathers and mothers threw their scythes, axes and knives on the ground with the blades up during thunderstorms. When I asked the reason, they replied that the devil is afraid of the arrows of lightning and runs away fast. In fear of being struck by lightning, he stumbles on these edged tools, wounds himself or even cuts off his feet. Then he cannot wander on earth and harass people anymore.

Kes müristamise ajal väljas põllu pääl raudriistadega oli, see ei hoidnud neid mitte käes, vaid peitis riiete alla ära, siis ei pidanud kuri riiete alla tikkuma. (H, Kase 101 < Halliste, Karksi (1868).)

If somebody was in the field during a thunderstorm and carried iron tools, he didn't hold them in his hands but hid them under his clothes. Then the Evil One couldn't hide himself under the clothes.

The two texts above offer contradictory advice, but both rely on beliefs about the devil who tries to escape from lightning. Sharp tools could wound him; metal was supposed to ward him off. There are other beliefs that have been expressed in contradictory rules of action. It appears from numerous sayings that there is a strong association between thunder and fire. Saving oneself and one's home from lightning involved practices of lighting fire or vice versa – putting it out – as a precaution to avoid accidents:

Kui ahi müristamise ajal kööb, tuleb see ära kustutada. (H II 53, 650 (12) < Simuna (1895).)

If there is a fire in the stove during a thunderstorm, this should be put out.

Kui vanõmb ülevän om (müristap), sis ei tohi mitte tuld üles tettä, muidu lätt maja palama. (H II 56, 987 (2) < Kanepi (1895).)

When it thunders (*vanõmb om ülevan*), one should not light a fire, otherwise the house will catch on fire.

Et pikne majja ega hoonesse ei lööks, pane küünal toas põlema. (RKM II 34, 201 (1) < Keila (1948).)

Light a candle in the room, then lightning won't strike the house.

Äikese ajal pannakse lamp põlema - siis välk ei löö sisse. (RKM II 4, 270 (31) < Anseküla (1946).)

When it thunders, light the lamp, then lightning won't strike the house.

Müristamise ajal tehakse pliidi alla väikest tuld ja lastakse selle suits tuppa, siis välk ei löövat sisse. (ERA II 60, 499 (3) < Häädemeeste (1933).)

When it thunders, a little fire is made in the oven and the smoke is let in the room, then lightning will not strike the house.

Müristamise puhul tehti tuli ahju või pliidi alla, et see nagu kisub ülespoole. (E, StK 40, 221 (22) < Peetri (1927).)

When it thundered, fire was lit in the oven or in the stove. This draws [air] upwards.

In these texts, a mythic notion about the devil does not appear. Instead, thunder seems to be interpreted as a natural phenomenon which requires natural precautions, such as making or putting out a fire, considering the flow of air and avoiding risky movements:

Myristamise aeg ei tohi sõrmega näidata, lööb surnuks. See nagu õhu vool, tõmbab sisse. (ERA II 10, 412 (21) < Harju-Madise < Kullamaa (1929).)

When it thunders, it is forbidden to point [at lightning] with your finger, it will strike you dead. This is like a flow of air, it draws [lightning?].

Rules of action during thunderstorms quite often rely on materialistic and (quasi-)scientific discourse, not on supernatural beliefs. Some precautions against lightning that seem naïve or based on sympathetic magic in the present day express knowledge about hidden powers of nature, such as electricity and magnetism. In addition, there has been an awareness that objects made from metal are primary targets for lightning. The reference to a medical doctor in the following text indicates that the authority of educated people has been crucial in spreading new notions about thunder as a natural phenomenon.

Ei tohtind puu alla minna. Tuld ei tohtind teha. Kunda tohter Luik ütles, et koera ei tohi ligi lasta, pidi makneti olema. Mustal koeral kõige rohkem. (ERA II 28, 474 (21) < Viru-Nigula < Haljala (1930).)

[During a thunderstorm] it was forbidden to go under a tree. It was forbidden to light a fire. Doctor Luik from Kunda says that one should stay away from dogs, because they are magnetic. Black dogs are the most magnetic.

Kui välku lööb ja müristab, siis pannakse uksed, aknad ja kõik õhuaugud kinni, et välk ei lööks sisse. Ka igasugused asjad, milles magneeti, peidetakse ära. Näiteks käärid pannakse kas sahtlisse või padja alla. Seda tehakse sellepärast, et kardetakse, et need võivad tõmmata välku ligi, olles seega õnnestuse korral õnnetuse aluseks. (ERA II 131, 154/5 /(221) < Kadrina (1936/1937).)

> During thunderstorms doors, windows and all vents are closed to prevent lightning from striking a house. All kinds of things that contain magnetism are also hidden. For example, scissors are put into a drawer or under a pillow. This is done for fear that they can attract lightning and cause an accident.

> Kui punasest vasest on kinga rauad ehk mujal kusagil on punast vaske, kui siis läheb see inimene välja, kellel eelpool nimetatud ainet läheduses, kui väljas vali pikne on, lööb pikne inimese surnuks. (ERA II 164, 549 (47) < Kihelkonna (1933).)

> If somebody has shoe heels of red copper or carries red copper elsewhere and goes out during heavy thunder, lightning will strike him dead.

Obviously, a shift from mythic and religious discourse to naturalistic conceptualisations of meteorology has been supported by education and schoolbooks. By the end of the 19th century, the world of Estonian peasants was partially disenchanted from the supernatural aura of legends and more rational outlooks on nature emerged.

Book-Lore about Thunder

Literacy was already spread widely among Estonian peasants at the end of the 18th century (Andresen 1999: 250). Not many school books were published in the first half of the 19th century, but during the second half of the century their number grew rapidly and their quality improved (Andresen 2002: 274–275). During the years 1842–1917, ten study-books about nature were published in the Estonian language in thirteen printings resulting in about thirty thousand copies. During 1855–1917 six study-books of physics were also published in nine printings resulting in nearly thirteen thousand copies. (Paatsi 2003: 176.) It therefore makes sense to analyse the book-lore taught in schools and to compare this knowledge with folklore recordings. It seems likely that education must have influenced vernacular theories about thunder.

In 1782, Friedrich Gustav Arvelius (1753–1806) published his *Üks kaunis jutto- ja öppetusse-ramat* ['A Nice Book of Stories and Instruction'], addressed to peasant children. This didactic and religious book includes a chapter about two peasants, Peter and Willem, who are working in the field during an approaching thunderstorm. Frightened, Peter suggests that they should take shelter under an old tree, but because there are dry branches on its top, Willem warns him that the "fire of lightning" often strikes such trees (Arwelius 1782: 97). Willem explains that thunder is a great favour of God. It shakes the earth, makes it fertile through warm rain, and cleans the earth of evil vapours. While the men are talking in the field, the lightning strikes the tree and Peter thanks Willem for saving him (Arwelius 1782: 98). Georg Gottfried Marpurg's (1755–1835) *Weikenne oppetusse nink luggemisse Ramat* ['The Little Book of Instruction and Reading'] (1805) was written in the dialect of Tartu county. It was intended for village and parish schools in South Estonia and offered a wide range of information

about nature, geography, mathematics and other disciplines (Andresen 2002: 251). Its instructions are given by an enlightened schoolmaster who criticizes superstitions. In a dialogue with his pupils, he discusses beliefs about thunderstones – oblong stones resembling ships – that are sometimes found in the fields. He says that stones do not come from the skies, but grow underground, and the alleged thunderstones are actually tools and weapons from ancient times. (Marpurg 1805: 40–41.) Next, the schoolmaster ridicules sayings about thunder, such as "Grandfather moves, thunders, is throwing his bowling ball" (*wanna Essa käüp, mürrisep, wiskap keili*). He explains that God is not an old man but love, who shows his grace to us through thunder. The schoolmaster refers to a clergyman who has explained thunder as a special kind of fire, called the fire of electricity (*elektri tuli*). God has created it for the sake of the fertility of the soil and the health of men and animals. When clouds accumulate this electric fire, it jumps into other clouds, creating sparks and making bangs. (Marpurg 1805: 41–42.) The schoolmaster tells pupils not to stand under trees or near stacks of hay when it thunders because lightning strikes high objects. If a thundercloud is right above one's head, it is best to lie down (Marpurg 1805: 43). Finally, the whole instruction is summarised in a brief compendium:

> If, when it thunders, Pedo says, 'Grandfather moves, thunders, scolds', this is a stupid idea and saying. God is not an old man who thunders, scolds or is throwing his bowling ball. God is love and through thunder he shows his fatherly love to us. Therefore we owe our humble gratitude to God each time it thunders. (Marpurg 1805: 45.)

We can note that the notions of a wrathful God, wide-spread in folklore, are opposed to and substituted by the image of the loving heavenly father. Later in the book, the author criticizes harmful superstitions concerning thunder – like the belief that it is impossible to extinguish fire started by lightning. (Marpurg 1805: 61–62). As we saw above, religious and naturalistic theories of thunder blend in this study-book, which was widely used in Estonian schools during the first decades of 19th century. In addition, we find evidence of vernacular sayings, which seem to carry the same playful and joking modality that we noted earlier. Thus, humorous phrases about thunder have probably been spread in parallel to religious folklore before the naturalistic theories became popular.

The next influential school-book about nature was *Wisika, ehk öppetus lodud asjade issewisidest ja wäggedest* ['Physics, or Instruction about the Characteristics and Powers of Created Things'], published by Johann Georg Schwartz (1793–1874) in 1855. Thunder is here explained as a manifestation of electric power, which is sleeping in clouds until it is awakened in lightning. Schwartz praises the greatness of God who has created electric power and lightning – an electric spark which jumps from one cloud onto another cloud. Thunder is the echo of the great rumble caused by lightning. (Schwartz 1855: 100–101.) The author also writes that lightning strikes the highest objects, such as church towers, trees and hay-stacks, and that

it demolishes stones, melts metal and kills humans and animals. He warns people not to run or drive during thunderstorms, because this causes a movement of wind, which attracts lightning. Schwartz ridicules as stupid the superstition that fire, ignited by lightning, can only be extinguished with cow's milk. He also explains the principles of constructing lightning rods. (Schwartz 1855: 101.) Similar instructions about thunder as a "manifestation of electric power" are given in the study-book of geography, compiled by Moritz Georg von Kauzmann (1811–1874) and Ernst Wilhelm Woldemar Schultz (1813–1887), first published in 1854 (Kauzmann & Schultz 1868 [1854]). Electricity is defined as a "miraculous power, created by God in the world and air"; lightning is "the spark of electric fire, which strikes out from a cloud" (Kauzmann & Schultz 1868 [1854]: 43). Kauzmann and Schultz repeat the same warnings about staying away from trees, towers and other high structures as well as objects from iron, copper and other metals (Kauzmann & Schultz 1868 [1854]: 44).

Carl Robert Jakobson's (1841–1882) *Kooli lugemise ramat* ['School Reading Book'] (1867) was among the most widely used study-books in late 19th century. As opposed to earlier discussions that ridiculed the superstitions of the old folk, this study-book appreciates their wisdom:

> Since ancient times, people have noticed that lightning prefers to strike things made from iron, copper and other metals, it also strikes high objects. Hence the old folk teaches us and tells us: if it thunders right above your head, you should not hide yourself under a spruce or some other tree; you should not go to objects which contain iron; if you are carrying a gun, you should put it aside; if you are riding a horse in an open field, you should climb down. This is not idle talk but wise instruction, which is based on the observances of the old folk. (Jakobson 1867: 147.)

Jakobson has used a work by the Estonian enlightener Otto Wilhelm Masing (1763–1832), who praises God for providing man with reason and an ability to learn from His deeds. Thanks to this, man has invented the lightning rod. (Jakobson 1867: 147–148.) Jakobson has also published a short didactic story about a king who is riding a horse and carrying armour during a thunderstorm. When lightning strikes a big oak tree next to him, the king falls from his horse. Later, he praises the true king who had taken mercy on him. (Jakobson 1867: 26.) In addition to the religious discourse about thunder, Jakobson also introduces ancient Estonian mythology. Next to the main God called *Jumal*, Jakobson mentions minor deities such as *Uku*, the God of Thunder (*Ukko, müristamise Jumal*) (1867: 156).

Ado Grenzstein (1849–1916) published his schoolbook *Looduse nõuud ja jõuud. Kodule ja koolile* ['Means and Powers of Nature. For Home and School'] in 1880. He claims that lightning is a big spark of electric power. It moves as a huge ball of fire and presses together the air which blocks its way. Therefore, lightning cannot move straight but only crookedly and zigzag-wise. Its movement creates a hole in the air, which is like an empty tube. When air falls into the hole, this causes the sound of thunder which is intensified as it moves between clouds. (Grenzstein 1880: 186–187.)

The author provides detailed precautions about appropriate behaviour for when it is thundering. It is better to stay away from church towers, the masts of ships, trees, stacks of hay and grain and heaps of stones. When indoors, one should stay away from the walls, windows, chimney, glass lamps and mirrors, because lightning runs across these objects easily. The flow of air is dangerous, because it may carry the arrow of lightning. It is also risky to remain near crowds of people or herds of animals, especially if they run, as their vapour attracts lightning. If only one person runs, this is not as dangerous as people say. We also learn that death by lightning must be painless because it kills in a single moment. (Grenzstein 1880: 188.) Alexander Bilov (1857–1910) published his study book *Füsika* ['Physics'] in 1885. He expands the discussion about lightning as an electric spark and about free electricity in clouds when writing that clouds can be either positively or negatively charged (Bilov 1885: 79). The book *Wälk ja müristamine* ['Lightning and Thunder'], published by Evald Dolf (1874–1953), introduces some new topics, such as different colours of lightning and the causes of electricity gathering in clouds, such as the movement of air, drying of water and the existence of electrical power in the earth (Dolf 1907: 14–20). The sound of thunder is caused by a strong undulating of air and it is intensified by echo (Dolf 1907: 21–22). The traditional passage of practical knowledge includes information about the perils connected with high objects (towers, trees, mountains and cliffs), metals and water. We learn that the worst thing to do would be to climb a church tower and ring the bell. People who work in the fields should throw away all metal tools, such as reaping hooks, scythes, spades and axes. When indoors, one should stay away from doors and windows (as objects containing metal parts) and keep them open. In addition, the stove and chimney can be dangerous because soot directs electric power. (Dolf 1907: 27–28.)

We can see that religious discourse about thunder was gradually losing ground in 19th century book-lore and giving way to materialistic explanations. At the same time, mythic discourse was rising in the context of Estonian literature. Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1803–1882) used the motif of thunder and the devil in the epic *Kalevipoeg* (III: 12–22), first published from 1857–1861:

Äike sõudis rauda sillal
Vaske ratusil vankriga,
Tuiskas tulda, tulleessa,
Sädämeida sõitenessa;
Pikker taati põrutelles
Kärinada käidanessa
Viskas välku väledaste.
Kurjad vaimud kohkunessa
Kuulsid karistaja eale,
Põgenesid Pikse paku
Laia mere laenetesse
[....]
(Kreutzwald 1857: 116.)

Then the thunder came:
a cart on copper wheels
rolling on an iron bridge,
whirling fire all the while
and shooting sparks;
the old Thunderer rumbled,
crackling quickly
and tossing lightning bolts.
Evil goblins heard him and took fright;
they feared the Avenger's roaring
and fled the thunder into the waves
[....]
(Kreutzwald 1982: 35.)

From 1860 to 1865, Kreutzwald published *Eesti rahva ennemuistsed jutud* ['Old Estonian Fairy Tales'] in several parts. In these stories, he blended local and international folktales with literary fantasies. Several of these tales are based on the conflict between thunder and the devil ("The Foolhardy Man", "Thunderer's Trumpet", "Good Deed Rewarded" [Kreutzwald 1996 [1860–1865]: 166–181]). Matthias Johann Eisen (1857–1934) published different versions of folk narratives about Old Nick who flees from thunder. For example, the devil tries to hide under an empty vessel and in a stack of hay but is struck by lightning (Eisen 1893: 17–21, 34–35). Eisen also compiled a popular book *Jumal ja jumalad* ['God and Gods'] in which he offered an overview about Estonian thunder deities *äike, kõu* and *pikker* – all subordinated to the sky god *Uku* – according to his understanding (Eisen 1889: 17, 20–36). In short, by the end of the 19th century, the oral traditions of Estonia were imbued with literary influences. As the book market grew, ancient Estonian mythology was discussed in print and examples of literary elaborations of folklore became models for the oral tradition as well as influencing local collectors' conceptions of quality and ideas about what was interesting or valuable for collection. Mythic discourse and beliefs about thunder had become part of the literary culture.

Alternative Discourses and Constructing Ancient Heritage

At the end of the 19th century, several collectors of Estonian folklore were aware of the difference between vernacular and "enlightened" discourses about nature. They conceptualized folklore as an ancient heritage, which had to be differentiated from the rational theories of sciences. While the educated collectors represented a modern worldview, the "old folk" was depicted as conservative and superstitious, unable to understand the natural causes of thunder:

> Niisama arvatakse müristamine iseäralik Jumala töö olema, mis ta iga kord uueste teeb. Et müristamine kuivade ilmade tõttu, pilvedesse korjanud elektri väe ja õhu kokku trehvamisel, sünnitud tulest tuleb, et müristamine muud ei ole kui välgu häel, seda ei usu keegi. Müristamist kardavad kõik inimesed enamiste. Mõni kuri joodik mees suurustab vahest: 'Muud ma kedagist ei karda, aga müristamist ma kardan.' [….]
>
> Et teras, raud, ja muud metallid elektri väge külge tõmbavad, sellest ei jäksa vanemad inimesed aru saada. Niisama ei usu nad seda, et elektri vägi kolme sugune on, üks põletaja, teine lõhkuja ja kolmas sulataja. (H II 65, 629 (12) < Jüri (1898).)

> It is believed that thundering is a particular work of God, done now and again. Nobody believes that thunder is caused by fire, which is born because of the encounter between the power of electricity and air, caused by dry weather. Nobody believes that thunder is nothing more than the sound of lightning. Everybody is usually afraid of thunder. An evil drunkard will sometimes boast: 'I am not afraid of anybody but thunder.' [....]

> Elderly people are not capable of understanding that steel, iron and other metals attract the power of electricity. Likewise they do not believe that there are three kinds of powers of electricity: one burns, the second destroys and the third one melts.

Such contradistinctions between religious beliefs and scientific explanations are carried by the spirit of rationalism and education, which is also revealed in the tripartial classification scheme of thunder given above. There are tensions between the different discourses but we can also observe their inter-dependence. The modern perspective on nature implied knowledge about the obsolete beliefs of the "old folk" in order to offer enlightened alternatives, such as the theory of electric power spread through Estonian schools. Ancestral beliefs seemed more archaic when observed from the point of view of natural science:

> Lightning and thunder. Nowadays, in the light of modern investigations, even less educated people know that lightning and thunder are born in nature from the power of electricity. How our ancestors explained these phenomena of the powers of nature is probably not yet known to everybody, therefore I have to say a couple of words here about what I have heard about this from the mouth of the folk and what I have seen while travelling among the people.
>
> Thundering is the voice of Grandfather (*Vanaisa*) and lightning is his iron stick, which he uses to punish his naughty children and to chastise evil. When Old Nick (*vanapagan*) or an evil one (*paharet*) causes mischief on earth among people and misleads them from obeying the Old Man of Heaven (*Taeva Taat*) and from following his will, then Grandfather gets angry and his usually kind and gracious face frowns. He takes his fiery iron stick in his hand in order to punish Old Futile (*vanatühi*) or to scold his children. Old Nick (*vanapagan*) is very much afraid of the stick of *Uku* and tries to hide himself anywhere, even if he only hears the scolding voice of the Old Man. He takes pleasure in hiding himself under big stones, high trees and the roofs of houses. But Grandfather's eye sees him everywhere and he destroys everything which gives shelter to Old Futile (*vanatühi*), and hits the horned fellow (*sarvik*) with his iron rod so hard that sparks spring out. If this happens near houses, it sets them on fire. Therefore, one should not take shelter from rain under high trees and eaves when it thunders; also, one should not climb big high boulders, because it may happen that the old horned fellow (*vana sarvik*) has hid himself under them, which may cause misfortune. For the same reason, one should not keep doors and windows wide open when it is thundering, otherwise the old boy (*vanapoiss*) can run in while trying to escape and can cause misfortune for the house. In addition, one should not run when it is thundering, otherwise *Uku* may think that the old boy (*vanapoiss*) has transformed himself into a man and is trying to escape from his rage in this guise. He may strike the runner with his iron stick, causing his death. Finally, everybody who wants to save himself from misfortune should see that his pockets are not quite empty, and one should not carry empty vessels or containers, otherwise Old Futile might take shelter there and cause misfortune. People believe this and even say it nowadays in some corners of the land. I have found this belief particularly in the coastal regions of

> Pärnu county, in Saarde parish and Voltveti, where the education of the people is rather poor. In this parish, people were exhausted by serfdom only a few years ago, and even now only a few masters are free from it. When I was travelling there three years ago, I passed through a forest. There was a hayfield in the middle of the forest. When I reached the hayfield, I saw an old woman walking in front of me. In the meantime, clouds came from the south and it thundered far away. After a while, lightning was striking and it started to rain. Suddenly there was a sharp thunderclap quite near. When the old woman heard this, she was startled, stopped and put her milk can on the ground. Then she started to search her pockets. When she had thoroughly checked her pockets, she picked up a piece of wood, broke it and put the pieces in her two pockets. She also took a few straws of hay and put them into her can. I observed her from the distance and she did not see me. When she had finished, she put her hands together and sighed aloud: 'Father, Son, Holy Cross, keep Old Futile (*vanatühi*) away from me!' With these words, she picked up the can and resumed walking. I followed her quickly, greeted her and started a conversation: 'Old lady, you put some pieces of wood into your pockets and into the can, why do you need them?' For a while the old woman looked at me as though she could not understand my question. Finally she asked, 'Dear son, don't you yet know this?' 'No, I don't, mother,' I replied. Then she told me about these thunder beliefs (*pikse usk*) and confirmed her sayings with several examples. She gave the names of quite a few people who had suffered from lightning because they had not observed these customs and neglected this faith. (EKS 4° 5, 245/50 < Saarde (1890).)

The educated folklore collector begins by expounding the radical difference between the modern, scientific understanding of nature and the beliefs of the old folk. Recording folklore means looking back in time and making efforts to reconstruct a more complete picture from numerous bits and pieces. He has presented an example of "mythic discourse" – a supposedly archaic set of beliefs, formulated in a Romantic style and slightly decorated by literary mystifications, such as the identification of thunder with the pagan deity *Uku*. This is followed by a passage of social criticism against serfdom, lack of education and economic backwardness. Whereas in many parts of Estonia, peasants had become independent farmers, in these remote corners, people still served the Baltic-German landlords. The folklore collector observes the behaviour of an old woman from a distance. She represents the traditions of ancient Estonia, where Christianity and pagan ideas co-existed. In the final conversation, the two compatriots talk with each other and the old woman expresses her ancient beliefs, confirming them with the evidence of true stories. This somewhat stylised dialogue is a symbolic meeting of the two contrasted ages and social roles – an educated modern man, representing progress and the future, and a backward peasant woman, who represents the vanishing past. Remarkably, the folklore collector has used the pseudonym *Sannamees* ['a man living in sauna'] when sending the document to the Society of the Estonian Men of Letters (1872–1893) – the central organization co-ordinating folklore collection at that time. The pseudonym implies poverty, simplicity and identification with the peasant folk. Although the collector remained anonymous, it has been

found that this pseudonym was used by J. Jutt, who worked in the 1880s as an apothecary (Mälk 1963: 276). The growing distance between modern Estonia and peasant folk life generated feelings of nostalgia and endeavours to save the valuable remnants of a disappearing past.

Closing Remarks: Dynamics of Vernacular Theorising

At the end of the 19th century, folklore was recorded all over the country. This nationwide work produced huge folklore collections, but it also circulated old beliefs and revived mythic discourse in oral and literary forms. Without conscious value-attribution to the ancient Estonian heritage, this knowledge would have been suppressed much more rapidly by the modern materialistic worldview. The folklore movement supported the co-existence of divergent discourses to such an extent that sometimes they could be expressed in a single statement which mixes heterogeneous elements and different frames of interpretation:

> Vana rahvas usub, et kui vanemb müristab ja pikse nuul, (ehk eletr säde) kohegi puusse kivisse j.n.e. lööb, sis olevad sääl tont, ehk kuri vaim omale varju paika võtnu. (H II 30, 583 (1) < Nõo (1889).)
>
> The old folk believe that when it thunders (*vanemb müristab*) and the arrow of lightning (i.e. electric spark) strikes a tree, stone, etc. – there is a demon (*tont*) or an evil spirit (*kuri vaim*) there who is trying to hide himself.

> Välgust. Välk on taevalautusest rahva karistamiseks ja õhu puhastamiseks. Uskjatel on õhupuhastus, uskmatutel karistuseks. Välk tuleb õhust ja õhukliimast, seda ma ole kuulnu. (RKM II 147, 58 (40) < Häädemeeste (1962).)
>
> On lightning. Lightning is from the skies to punish people and clean the air. For believers, it is the cleaning of the air, for non-believers, a punishment. I have heard that lightning comes from the air and atmospheric climate.

From a rationalistic perspective, materialistic and religious explanations would seem to exclude each other. If lightning is caused by atmospheric forces, how can it also be a divine punishment? Vernacular theorizing is obviously more flexible than the rationalistic quest for objective knowledge. Vernacular ideas are not exclusive but complimentary, reminding us of post-modern notions of truth as a verbal construct that is valid within a certain discursive framework.

Folkloric utterances hardly make sense if we look at them in isolation as unique textual entities. They become meaningful through their context, including the web of intertexts, belief systems, ideologies and the whole realm of textual production. Folklore is reproductive as it relies on traditional forms, on repetitions of earlier performances and words that have been uttered on multiple occasions before. But as folklore is adapted to new contexts and changing social needs, it is subject to creativity and becomes

a resource for creativity. Folklore texts participate in making genres but they also produce collective knowledge: on the one hand they reconstruct and circulate former knowledge, and on the other hand they introduce new outlooks, challenging and undermining traditional notions about the world. I agree with Lenn E. Goodman (1993: 77), who states that the "very idea of a homogeneous worldview, underlying and explaining supposed uniformities of thought, is misleading." Rational notions of objective truth which underlie the scientific epistemologies cannot exhaust the complexities of vernacular theorising. Hence, it is impossible to render the beliefs of the "old folk" about thunder in a short phone conversation to make them plainly explicit for students of sciences. Instead of a monolithic notion of "how things are", we find a dense web of views, hypotheses and opinions, both traditional and modern. Mythic, religious, natural and other discourses have offered different frameworks for the basic knowledge about the powers of nature and fragility of human life.

NOTES

1 Frog has called a narrative which develops a socially acknowledged identity beyond an individual textual entity or textual entities (i.e. conventional representations of one narrative in multiple modes of communication) an extra-textual entity (see Frog 2010: 204–205). The existence of such folkloric phenomena can also be observed on a higher level than individual narratives.
2 I am thankful to Oleg Uljašev for providing me with the Komi vernacular term for the "Thunderer" appropriate to this context.
3 I have tried to differentiate these names in the English translations. As the Estonian language does not use articles, distinguishing the concrete singular 'the devil', the abstract singular 'a devil', and the proper name becomes problematic.
4 References to the collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu. As much as possible, I have indicated the parish and year of recording.
5 Belief in Elijah's connection with thunder was widely spread in southeastern Estonia (Vanatoa 1985: 23–24), indicative of the influence of Orthodox Christianity.

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Lauri Harvilahti and Elina Rahimova

Lemminkäinen

Adventure-Loving Braggart or Mythic Hero?*

The purpose of this article is to compare the hero-image of Lemminkäinen created by Elias Lönnrot in the national poetic epic *Kalevala* with those conceptions of the figure of Lemminkäinen accessible through the Kalevala-meter folk poems. The scope will expand from relationships between the folk poetry and *Kalevala* to problems in comparative study and the ethnocultural substrata which may underlie images and motifs. To begin, a brief overview of the figure of Lemminkäinen in Finnish research history will be provided. This will be followed by addressing the figure of Lemminkäinen in relation to the themes and heroes of the Russian epic songs called *bylina*s, to which he has been compared in research. The end of this paper will discuss the mythic foundations of poetic themes associated with Lemminkäinen and their potential correspondences in the archaic mythic epic folklore of the Altai region.

Kalevala and The Song of Lemminkäinen

In his work of creating *Kalevala*, one of Elias Lönnrot's most important strategies was grouping and combining folk poems – the material which he employed as a foundation for this poetic epic – according to their main figures. Lönnrot's objective was probably to create narrative tensions and continuity in the plot structure, because linking together discrete or separate folk poems did not work as a basis of epic narration. Lönnrot therefore combined heroic poems thematically associable with the figure of Lemminkäinen in order to create the scenes of *Kalevala* presenting this hero. Lönnrot seems to have projected himself into an ancient hero-world, which he himself creatively constructed, as he clearly emphasizes the heroicness of the poems.

* This is a significantly revised and expanded version of an article which appeared in Finnish under the title "Lieto Lemminkäinen – Seikkailunhaluinen rehvastelija vai myyttinen hahmo" in *Kalevalan hyvät ja hävyttömät*, edited by Ulla Piela, Seppo Knuuttila and Tarja Kupiainen (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1999).

When Elias Lönnrot started to draft out collages of poetry on the basis of materials which he had collected on his first trips around Finland and Karelia, he began with Lemminkäinen. In July of 1833, from many diverse transcribed examples of folk poems in Kalevala-meter, Lönnrot compiled an 825 line poem containing the journey of Lemminkäinen as an uninvited guest to the feast of Päivölä which integrated the themes of Lemminkäinen's courtship and Lemminkäinen's death (Kuusi & Anttonen 1985: 88–89). Although later collection and the accumulation of collected sources led the creator of the epic to abandon thoughts of publishing this early compiled poem about Lemminkäinen, the hero continued his life as one of the main kalevalaic figures. Alongside Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, Lemminkäinen belongs among the most important heroes in both the *Old Kalevala* (1835) and in the *New Kalevala* (1849).

In his preface to the *Old Kalevala*, Lönnrot characterizes Lemminkäinen as a light-hearted, young, proud, rash yet brave hero who brags of his power and deeds (Lönnrot 1835: iv–v). In 1836, he described the appearance of the hero in his essay "Lieto Lemminkäinen" as follows:

> [...] a noble, tall, full-blooded man, whose kind is scarce, and whom girls may have looked on with swooning eyes. [....] When on the road to war or on other dangerous journeys, Lemminkäinen was garbed in his iron shirt, or *sotisopa*. From his belt, a knife hung at his right hip, and at his left, a *kalpa*, or short, wide and strong sword, decorated with many ornamentations on its blade, handle and sheath. (Majamaa 1990: 69, 71.)

Lönnrot further emphasized the hero's powers of a *tietäjä* (a vernacular wielder of magic and incantations) and his practical skills and knowledge as a handler of horses and horse tack, as a man of the forest, as a farmer and as a skilled crafter of boats, skis and other practical things. A description of the self-sacrificing heroicness of Lemminkäinen's mother also found its place in this essay (Majamaa 1990: 71).

This embellished written description built up around Lemminkäinen was naturally tied up with the romantic spirit of the time. In any case, Lönnrot's conceptions of the heroicness of Lemminkäinen led him to combine this hero with themes related to several figures in the original folk poems. These are primarily the folk poems which tell of Ahti Saarelainen and themes connected to Kaukamoinen or Kaukomieli, as well as the folk poem *Skiing Down the Elk of Hiisi* (*Hiiden hirven hiihdäntä*). Moreover, in the materials collected from different singers, Lemminkäinen appears to be the main figure of several poems. Lemminkäinen also compliments the images and characteristics of the main heroes of Lönnrot's epic – Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen. The young, adventurous and impetuous lady's man is a counterbalance to the more serious and older heroes: knowledgeable Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, forger of the *sampo*.

The decisions which shaped the composition of *Kalevala* deviated greatly from the folk poems. The models for the whole, compiled utilizing many folk poems, can be found in Finnish as well as in many other common Eurasian motifs. Lönnrot's narration deviates from folk poems, particularly

in changes to the landscape or the central figure of narration, often without a clear connection to what had already been told (see Kaukonen 1979: 183–184).

The 11th runo of the *New Kalevala* describes Lemminkäinen's courtship expedition and his adventures with women on the Island. At the conclusion of these adventures, the hero steals Kyllikki away to be his wife. This episode was adapted from a folk poem about Ahti Saarelainen, where it concluded in an agreement according to which the hero promised to leave aside going off to wars and Kyllikki promised to stop going about in the village. However, in the folk poems, Kyllikki was not kidnapped. Kyllikki breaks her promise, and the 12th runo of *Kalevala* begins with Lemminkäinen's courtship expedition to Pohjola. There, Lemminkäinen accomplishes several heroic feats to obtain a bride: hunting Hiisi's elk, harnessing Hiisi's horse and shooting the swan of Tuonela. These are followed by a dramatic chain of events orchestrated by Lönnrot, culminating in one of the *Kalevala*'s climaxes: Märkähattu Karjapaimen ['Wet-Hat Cattle-Herdsman'], whom Lemminkäinen had accused of incest, kills the hero at the river of Tuonela in revenge and throws his dismembered body into the river's current. In the 15th runo of *Kalevala*, Lemminkäinen's mother finds out about the death of her son, gathers the pieces of his body from the river of Tuonela, and restores him to life. Once Ilmarinen successfully accomplishes the challenges set by the prospective mother-in-law in his own courtship of the maiden, a great feast is organized in Pohjola (*Kalevala*, runos 18–25). It was precisely here that Lönnrot inserted Lemminkäinen's departure to the feast, the description of his haughty behaviour, and his slaying of the Master of Pohjola. Lemminkäinen escapes his murderous deed by fleeing to the Island. There, he seduces the women and angers the men. When he is driven away from the Island, he heads home only to find it destroyed. These episodes are followed further by the unsuccessful revenge-journey of Lemminkäinen and Tiera to Pohjola. Lemminkäinen is also presented as the companion of Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen on their journey to steal the *sampo*. Lemminkäinen had no place in that adventure in the oral tradition, but it was central to Lönnrot's plan to integrate *The Song of Lemminkäinen* (*Lemminkäisen virsi*) and related material into the larger cycle of narrative material related to Väinämöinen (and Ilmarinen).

Lemminkäinen among the Singers

Märkähattu Karjapaimen was the common adversary of Lemminkäinen in the singing area of Ilomantsi, and it is possible that he ended up in *Kalevala* precisely from the variant sung by Simona Sissonen, which D. E. D. Europaeus even mentioned in a letter to Lönnrot, dated July 19, 1845. Lönnrot replaced Ukko Umpisilmä ['Old Man Closed-Eye' or 'Blind Old Man'] of *Old Kalevala*, and Tuonen Poika ['Boy of Tuoni' or 'Death's Son'] of the still earlier work *Runokokous Väinämöisestä* ['A Collection of Songs about Väinämöinen'], with Märkähattu Karjapaimen as the slayer of Lemminkäinen.

The folk poems of *The Song of Lemminkäinen* have traditionally been divided into two distinct versions. According to the first of these, Lemminkäinen dies in a singing competition of *tietäjä*s, and his mother attempts to rouse him from death. This version could have foundations in a fertility cult widely known in Northern Eurasia (Siikala 1992: 263–271). In the other version, the hero challenges the host or other guest of the feast to a duel and he kills his opponent by chopping his head from his body with a sword which *luissa lohkielleella* / *pääkaluissa katkielleella* ['was split in splintering / was cloven in chopping skulls']. The hero flees home and, after receiving advice from his mother to hide from the revenge of the victim's family, he sails his craft to the island of maidens *selvällä meren selällä* ['on the clear open sea'].

In collected folk poems, the destiny of Lemminkäinen is different. What is most common in these sources, is that the death/resurrection material is not presented whatsoever – almost no one was singing it anymore. In the oral tradition, Lemminkäinen's fate was increasingly that he would not die at all (Frog 2010: 75–79, 83, 85–86, 88, 101–102). The singers could, however, present different conclusions to their folk poems and vary the course of narration, including the location where events take place and also participating figures. Thus in 1845, in the village of Mekrijärvi, in Ilomantsi, Simana Sissonen sang a version to the collector of kalevalaic poetry D. E. D. Europaeus, which described how Lemminkäinen went as an uninvited guest to the feast of Väinölä, and how Väinämöinen sang Lemminkäinen into the river of Tuoni because Lemminkäinen himself had "held" his own sister:

Tuo ikivanha Väinämöinen,	This ancient Väinämöinen,
Tietäjä iänikuinen,	*Tietäjä*, of age eternal,
Poika ponnun päivällinen,	Boy primeval, everlasting,
Joka laulo Lemminkäisen,	Who enchanted Lemminkäinen,
Ka'otti Kalevan poi'an	Doomed the boy of Kaleva
Tuonen mustahan jokehen,	Into the black river of Tuoni,
Manalan ikipurohon,	Into the eternal creek of Manala,
Johon puut tyvin putovi	Into which trees fall with their bases
Heinät latvoin lankiavi,	Hay drops with its tops,
Kynsin kylmähän kivehen,	By the nails into a cold stone,
Hampahin vesihakohon,	By the teeth into a watery log,
I'äksensä itkemähän,	For a lifetime to weep,
Ja kuuksi kujertamahan.	And for a month to complain.
Jopa tuli hukka Lemminkäistä,	And that was the destruction of Lemminkäinen
Pillo poikoa pahoa.	Of the bad mischevious boy.
(*SKVR* VII$_1$ 835, 185–199.)	

After that, Lemminkäinen's mother goes looking for her son, threatens Väinämöinen, and then he tells her of her son's location. However, she could not retrieve Lemminkäinen from the river: *Ei oo miestä mennehessä* / *Urosta uponnehessa* ['No man is in the one is gone / No hero in the one drowned'] (*SKVR* VII$_1$ 835, 260–261). In other variants, Simona Sissonen tells instead

that the feast is of Hiitola or Pohjola, and that invitations to the feast are sent out by Märkähattu Karjapaimen. This time too, Lemminkäinen departs on the journey to Hiitola, disregarding his mother's warnings and unconcerned about the dangers on the road, and in Hiitola, Märkähattu Karjapaimen enchants him into the river of Tuoni, indifferent to Lemminkäinen's defiance. This time, Lemminkäinen's mother saves her son from the river:

Tuopa maamo kantajainen	This mother, dear carrier
Vartti vaskisen haravan,	Fixed a handle to the copper rake,
Pisti piihin rautasihin,	Stuck to the iron prongs,
Haravoitsi vastavirran,	She raked against the current,
Vastavirran, myötävirran.	Against the current, with the current.
Jopa löytyi Lemminkäinen,	Thus was Lemminkäinen found,
Kohosi kalevan poika	Raised the boy of Kaleva
Sormesta nimettömästä,	By his nameless [ring] finger,
Vasemesta varpahasta.	By his left toe.
(*SKVR* VII$_1$ 836a, 219–227.)	

In folk poems, Kaukomoinen could appear as the hero in the place of Lemminkäinen as the uninvited guest going to feast of Päivölä, of Ahti Saarelainen, or of Väinölä. There are two versions of this folk poem: according to one, Lemminkäinen is slain in a singing competition of *tietäjä*s and his mother attempts to return him to life; according to the other, the hero challenges the host or a guest of the feast to a duel and kills his opponent by cutting off his head with a sword. The hero escapes and returns home, and, following his mother's advice, he sails his boat to the island of maidens.

Heroic quality is rather questionable in the Lemminkäinen folk poems – at least as it was presented by Karelian runo-singers across the period of collection. Despite the adventurous content of the folk poem about Lemminkäinen at the feast of Päivölä, there are a lot of shamanistic images and motifs from the *tietäjä* tradition, as for example reflected in the obstacles encountered on the hero's journey, which he must overcome in order to reach his destination. As obstacles blocking Lemminkäinen's road, there may be a serpent-fence, a fiery grave with fiery snakes or a gigantic serpent, or a field of adders. The road could also be guarded by wolves in bridle-rings, bears in iron shackles. Other obstacles include a fiery fence or course of rapids, a fiery grave full of hot stones, a log lying across the road, a hill filled with stakes mounted with skulls, or high mountains, fire-edged swords, and enormous bonfires. There was no lack of fantastic image elements among the singers of *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, those mentioned above being only a small sample of the obstacles encountered by the hero. These same shamanic images and animals also appear in incantations and ritual songs. The mental images have preserved shamanic conceptions in epic folk poetry in the same way as in the Altaic poems and incantations discussed below. Anna-Leena Siikala has written about the mental images connected to the journey to Tuonela (a vernacular realm of the dead) in kalevalaic folk poetry and incantations with comparisons to both Siberian shamanic and

Old Norse Germanic traditions (Pentikäinen 1987: 241–244, Siikala 1992: 39–45, 120–149). It is interesting to observe that equivalent obstacles and dangers to those encountered by Lemminkäinen appear abundantly among precisely those ethnic groups in which living shamanistic traditions can still be found.

Interpretations of and Points of Comparison with Lemminkäinen

A romantic nationalistic infatuation emanates from Julius Krohn's (1883) interpretations of Lemminkäinen, in which the multifaceted manly qualities of the hero also play their part. Although Krohn states that Lemminkäinen is by his nature "the Finnish people's own flesh and bone", he also refers to the raiding activities of Karelians:

> Yet for their part, could the desire for raiding be impossible for a people who, once the Viking pirates had stopped, made all of the eastern and southern shores of the Scandinavian peninsula insecure, even burning magnificent Sigtuna, right in the heart of Sweden, to the ground. (Krohn 1883: 83.)

Concerning the hero's adventures in love, Krohn (1883: 83) states that the fiery heart of Don Juan could "ignite in the burning cold of the North as well as in the burning sun of the South."

In his turn, Kaarle Krohn placed emphasis on a historical background of Scandinavian impacts and the Viking Age in the folk poetry, owing to the socio-political situation of his time. In the wake of struggles for Finland's independence, he compared "the Finnish Viking tradition" to the traditions of ancient Scandinavia. In his book, *Kalevalan runojen historia* ['The History of *Kalevala*'s Poems'] (1903–1910), he considered whether *Kalevala* was historical or "mythological" (*jumalistarullinen*). Concerning Lemminkäinen, he proposed that Lemminkäinen had received impacts from the ancient Icelandic myth of Baldr and from the Passion of Christ. From Scandinavia, the theme spread through Western Finland to Viena Karelia. It is however improbable that these themes reflect the death of Christ, as Krohn had presumed. (See Frog 2010: 104–105, 115, 153, 182, 319–320, 405.) Further, according to Kaarle Krohn, the parallel name for Lemminkäinen's mother – *Kave* – which appeared in folk poems documented in the villages of Vuoninen and Latvajärvi (Viena Karelia), meant "the Virgin Mary". He concluded that "the Son of God is concealed in Lemminkäinen." Accordingly, *The Song of the Virgin Mary's Search for her Child* (*Neitsyt Maarian lapsenetsintä-virsi*) and *The Death of Lemminkäinen* (*Lemminkäisen surma*) would be Christian legends. (Krohn 1903–1910: 577; cf. Pentikäinen 1987: 250, *passim*.) Kaarle Krohn also addressed the theme of Courtship with Heroic Feats (*Ansiotyökosinta*), and Skiing Down the Elk of Hiisi (*Hiiden hirven hiihdäntä*), as well as the Great Ox (*Ison härän runo*), which Lönnrot had connected with Lemminkäinen in *Kalevala*. As is consistent for the creator of the Historical-Geographic Method, Krohn stated that "at the foundation of Lemminkäinen's figure is not one person,

rather it is a composite of several figures from the folksongs" (Krohn 1903–1910: 632).

In 1918, Kaarle Krohn published the work *Kalevalankysymyksiä* ['Questions on the *Kalevala*'], the purpose of which was to function as a guide to readers of the volumes of *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* ['Old Folk Songs of the Finnish People'] which had been published up to that time. In this work, Krohn presented the method of text-criticism of the Finnish School that he had developed, and also emphasized that *Kalevala* could not be used as a source in folklore research. In connection with this, he also expressed suspicions concerning the reliability of Lönnrot's and Europaeus's documentation of folksongs.

Martti Haavio has compared numerous motifs originating from very diverse cultures using his motif-historical method. With this method, Haavio compared Finnish motifs and themes to parallels deriving from distant traditions and presented a hypothesis on the loan relations between them. He argued that an ancient Egyptian story – preserved in a papyrus manuscript – about the adventures of an Ethiopian sorcerer called Horus in the court of the Pharaoh – was the wellspring of *The Song of Lemminkäinen*. Haavio pointed to events which paralleled those in the folk poem about Lemminkäinen, such as, for example, Horus's mother warning him not to practice magic against Egyptian sorcerers, and, like Lemminkäinen, Horus telling his mother what will happen if he is slain: at home, drinks will turn to blood and food will become the colour of raw meat.

Following the route which the Lemminkäinen motifs travelled, Haavio found a "key" in the Russian *bylina* (a traditional narrative poem) *Vavilo and the Skomorox*s (*skomorox* ['joker, buffoon, jester, musician, actor']) referred to as *The Bylina of Vavilo* hereafter (see Haavio 1965: 370 and Oinas 1985, Pentikäinen 1987: 248–254, cf. Frog 2010: 411–415). This interpretation was based on the two versions of the *bylina* sung by M. D. Krivopolenova. Haavio compared the miracle of the resurrection of a rooster in this *bylina* to the miracle of the resurrection of a bull in *The Song of Lemminkäinen* – *Nousi härkä aamumaan* / [...] / *Jok' oli syöty mennä vuonna* ['Rose the bull to moo /.../ which had been eaten last year'] (*SKVR* I_2 758, 249, 251) – which appeared for example in *The Song of Lemminkäinen* sung by the most famous singer of Viena, Arhippa Perttunen. Haavio considered the fence of stakes ornamented with human heads around the yard of the Tsar called Sobaka of this *bylina* as equivalent to the hill of stakes in *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, and he pointed out the similarity of the scenes of battling magicians in each of these poems (Haavio 1965: 363). In Arhippa Perttunen's variant of *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, the singing competition concludes with the motif of the Great Ox. Correspondingly, in *The Bylina of Vavilo*, the hero Vavilo created a herd of oxen to drink the water which rose through the music of Tsar Sobaka. (Haavio 1965: 363.) In addition, Haavio thought that "*The Bylina of Vavilo* and *The Song of Lemminkäinen* were cast in rather similar moulds. Both use the stylistic device of repetition in the middle: *The Bylina of Vavilo* three encounters, *The Song of Lemminkäinen* three obstacles as a stylistic device." (Haavio 1965: 362.) The similarity presented by Haavio has the impression of being superficial, and no direct

correspondences are found. Furthermore, the stylistic feature of triple repetitions was widely used in Russian *bylina*s and ballad poetry, as well as in Kalevala-meter narrative poetry more generally. Haavio proposed that it is possible to outline the route of this motif's journey – from Egypt through Byzantium to Northern Russia, and from there on to Karelia – in terms of its historical stages of development. An additional argument was that on the one hand, Egypt was under Greek cultural influence in 300 BC, and on the other, Russia once stood within the influence of Byzantian culture and trade: the minstrels (*skomoroxi*) could thus have carried this theme up into northern regions.

This chain of evidence seems fanciful. A significant issue is raised by the possibility of more reasonable alternative explanations which warrant exploration, observing, for example, narrative poems of several Siberian ethnic groups which also present parallels that could have provided models and are found among much closer populations of more similar cultural backgrounds, as will be discussed below.

Matti Kuusi saw both shamanic and Christian elements underlying the Lemminkäinen folk poems. According to Kuusi, one of the Lemminkäinen themes handles the journey of a *tietäjä* to a singing competition that concludes with the slaying of his opponent. The other motif treats the death of Lemminkäinen and his mother's attempt to save her son. Kuusi dated the former to the late pre-Christian period of south-western Finland, and the latter to the "the period of barbaric Christianity" of Savo. (Kuusi et al. 1977: 538–540; see also Kuusi 1957.)

The Song of Lemminkäinen and Russian Bylina Traditions

It is possible to find parallels to some scenes of *The Song of Lemminkäinen* in several Russian *bylina*s. For example, in *The Bylina of Dobrynja and the Serpent*, the hero says farewell to his mother and departs to the Soročinskij Mountains, to the den of the serpent. His mother forbids him from swimming in the Pučai River and from stepping on baby serpents. In several variants, Dobrynja arrives in Kiev, encounters the serpent, defeats it in battle and frees the Russian prisoners from "the accursed serpent's" (*Zmeja prokljataja*) cave. In the *bylina* about the adventures of the hero Djuk Stepanovič, the scene in which he says farewell to his mother is still closer to the corresponding motif in *The Song of Lemminkäinen* than that which appears in the *bylina* about Dobrynja. Djuk asks his mother's blessings before departing for Kiev, and his mother forbids him from going. Just as Lemminkäinen's mother describes the "deaths" (*surmat*) awaiting him on the road to Päivölä, so the *bylina* hero Djuk is correspondingly warned about the obstacles which block his path: mountains which crash together and draw apart, predatory birds which peck, and the accursed twelve-muzzled serpent. Djuk departs to Kiev in spite of all of her warnings:

Испрогóворитъ бояринъ Дюкъ Степановичъ
А родители тутъ матушки,
А честнóй вдовы Мамельфы Тимофеевной:
«Ты родитель моя матушка,
«Честнà вдова Мамельфа Тимофеевна!
«Дай прощеньицо съ бласловленьицомъ
«Ѣхать къ стольнёму ко городу ко Кіеву
«А й ко ласковому князю ко Владиміру:
«Дашь с прощеньицо съ благословленьицомъ – поеду ли,
«Хоть не дашь прощеньица съ благословленьицемъ,
«Все равно поеду я».
(Gil'ferding 1873, item 9, ll. 50–60.)

Boyar Djuk Stepanovič speaks
To his parent, to his mother,
To the honourable widow Mamelfa Timofejevna:
"You, parent, my mother,
Honourable widow Mamelfa Timofejevna!
Give me forgiveness with your blessing
To go to the capital city of Kiev
And to the dear Prince Vladimir:
If you give me forgiveness with your blessing – I will go,
Even if you do not give forgiveness with your blessing –
Nevertheless I will go."

The concerned mother is the most significant connecting feature between the main figures of *The Song of Lemminkäinen* and the *bylina*s mentioned above.

There are also correspondences to *The Song of Lemminkäinen* in some scenes of *The Bylina of Sadko*, which transpires in Novgorod. The events in this *bylina* usually begin with Sadko not being invited to a feast of rich merchants, much as Lemminkäinen was not invited to the feast of Päivölä in some of the documented versions of the poem. The objective of Lemminkäinen's journey differs significantly from the objectives of the hero of the *bylina*, otherwise the arrangement is the same.

The models underlying both *The Song of Lemminkäinen* and Russian *bylina*s extend into remote antiquity. Lemminkäinen blazes a trail through the obstacles which he encounters on his journey with the use of magical means, just as a shaman on a journey to the otherworld. For example, fiery obstacles are overcome by singing an icy lake to cool them, bears and wolves are overcome with incantations that create sheep for the beasts to eat, and the sword with fiery edges is overcome by making a man from alder wood to go before him onto its blade. In contrast to the heroes of Russian narrative poems and Russian epic legendary songs, Lemminkäinen never slays the monster nor opens the path for those who will follow. He is content to survive the danger, leaving the obstacle in its place while he continues his journey to the feast of Päivölä, letting the monster live. The hero of a *bylina*, on the other hand, slays the monster and blazes a trail for those who will follow after (e.g. Gil'ferding 1873, item 74).

In heroic *bylina*s, the main objectives of heroic feats accomplished by the main figure are to save Holy Russia from the threat of monsters, and to execute the orders given by Prince Vladimir of Kiev (Harvilahti 1985: 10–11). Serpents symbolize the pastoral ethnic groups which took over Russia. Kalevala-meter heroic poetry and the epic traditions of Turkic peoples could be interpreted as reflecting a more archaic historical stage of development than the events of Russian *bylina*s, which are connected to historical frameworks. Parallels to the obstacles which threaten the hero on his journey in the poems about the feast of Päivölä (or Hiitola, Pohjola, Väinölä) are found abundantly among the small ethnic groups of Siberia, who maintained a shamanic cultural worldview up until recent times – and to some extent up through the present day.

Siberian Parallels to Some Motifs of the Lemminkäinen-Cycle

Descriptions of these monsters and obstacles of the landscape are encountered abundantly in Altaic heroic epic songs, among others. Obstacles and monsters such as these appear in several different parts of the long poem *Maaday-Kara* as performed by the most famed Altai singer, Aleksej Kalkin. The people of Maaday-Kara – the father of the poem's hero – were conquered by Kara-Kula Khan, who is assisted by many different kinds of mythic beings which act both as the guardians of his kingdom and as his helpers. Maaday-Kara's dark grey, four-eared steed with a four-braided mane has to overcome the boundaries guarded by monsters and mythic beings: two identical whales carrying the earth, two identical yellow poisonous serpents, seven grey wild boars, two black scabby camels, and two identical male bears. His horse puts the monsters to sleep employing magical means. Following this, Kara-Kula Khan commands his most dangerous monstrous predators to kill the horse. The main hero of the poem, the Maadaj-Kara's son, Kögüdey-Mergen, began performing his first heroic feats by slaying monsters when he was still a child. Kögüdey-Mergen slays seven giant wolves with one reed-arrow from his bow made of a rib, and kills nine black ravens with one stone. (Surazakov et al. 1973: 96–117.) The female guardian spirit of the Altai Mountains who raised Kögüdey-Mergen, advises the young hero how to penetrate his enemy's kingdom. In the dialogue with this guardian spirit before his departure, Kögüdey-Mergen states that he is prepared to sacrifice his own life:

Adïm kayda – mineyin – diyt,
Altayï kayda – barayïn – diyt.
Barbaan adïm ol čïkkanča,
Bargan adïm čïkkay – dedi.
Korkoon adïm ol čïkkanča,
Ölgön adïm čïkkay – dedi.
Ölöŋ jibes mal bar ba? – diyt,
Ölbös-barbas er bar ba? – diyt,
Jeri-jurtïn körödim – dep
(Surazakov et al. 1973: 118–119.)

Where is my steed, I will get on it,
Where is his (Kara-Kula's) land? I will go there.
Rather than that I did not depart,
Let it be heard – I went there,
Rather than that I was afraid,
Let it be heard – I died.
Is there a horse, which does not eat grass?
Is there a hero, who does not die, pass away?
I want to see his land and camp, he said

The hero of Altai folk poems, Kögüdey Mergen, is aided by his dark grey steed with a linen-like mane. It guides the hero to the right road at the place where seven roads meet, and the horse warns him of the first obstacle which he encounters: two similar-looking black men, ambassadors of Erlik Khan (the lord of the underground realm of the dead), who had already destroyed ninety-nine horses. If they also kill the linen-like maned one, then they will have killed one hundred all together. They had already destroyed ninety-nine riders, and if they also kill Kögüdey Mergen with their bronze cudgels, then they will have killed a full one hundred all together. The hero lets the monsters strike first, and after their cudgels break, he slays both opponents with his whip. (Surazakov et al. 1973: 129–133.)

Travelling on horseback to the kingdom of Kara-Kula Khan, Kögüdey-Mergen must leap a sea of yellow poison (Surazakov et al. 1973: 137–138) and pass through mountains which crash together (Surazakov et al. 1973: 139–140). Seventy horses and ninety heroes had been crushed by the crashing mountains before him, but Kögüdey-Mergen's linen-maned horse survives this obstacle. Kögüdey-Mergen slays the monsters, saves his parents and his imprisoned people, and takes revenge on his enemy.

The mythic imagery of Altaic and Mongolian narrative poems can be compared to the epic landscape of the folk poem about the feast of Päivölä. Magical obstacles belong to this imagery: a sea of fire, poison or milk; monstrous beings such as the king of serpents, a huge black male camel, an enormous grey bull and a giant fish. All of these have their own distinctive names and epithets associated with the mythological worldview. According to V. M. Žirmunskij (1962: 297), these monsters are associated with shamanistic mythic conceptions of the prince of the other world – the kingdom of Erlik – and belong to poems which tell about a hero's journey to the realm of the dead.

The monstrous figures of Turkic and Mongolian traditions narratively parallel the monsters encountered by Lemminkäinen. This similarity between the narrative poetry of Siberian pastoral ethnic groups and kalevalaic narratives is also relevant to the motif of courtship accompanied by challenges posed to the suitor. For example, Alyp-Manaš, a hero of Altai epic goes on a courtship expedition to the area where heaven and earth meet, from which there is no return, nor traces left behind. On his journey, the hero encounters "a wide blue river over which a winged horse could not leap, across which a boat with seven oarlocks could not row." The old boatman who carries Alyp-Manaš across the river, warns him of the dangers which lie ahead, and the hero leaves the boatman a nine-edged bronze

arrow: if the hero is slain, the shiny bronze arrow will corrode. (Žirmunskij 1962: 210.) This motif corresponds to the episode with the comb in *The Song of Lemminkäinen*: if the comb which Lemminkäinen leaves with his mother becomes bloody, then the hero has been slain. In Altai epic poems, the hero's steed has the features of a magic helper: it carries its host over a sea without shores or returns him to life (Žirmunskij 1962: 249). According to Žirmunskij, these mythic figures are based on the mythic conceptions of an otherworld realm of the dead which is situated beyond an impassable water barrier. It is worth observing that the description of the old man rowing the birch bark boat corresponds to Chiron, ferryman of the dead on the river Styx in Classical Greek mythology. (Žirmunskij 1962: 217.) A very common and widely used motif in Turkic and Mongol epic concerns a feminine relative (sister, bride or mother) or the hero's steed acting as the hero's saviour from an underground prison or from the realm of the dead (Žirmunskij 1962: 352). Once again, this is one common motif known among many Eurasian peoples and naturally the most inspiring (also for artists) scene in *The Song of Lemminkäinen*.

To Conclude

When investigating *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, it is possible to wind up conjecturing, like followers of the Historical-Geographic Method, that tradition is comparable to the current of a river, with its continuous branching into tributaries, or perhaps it spreads from one point outward, like ripples on the water, or could it be the cross-swell where influences from different directions create a new solution.

But what about currents which run deeper and from different eras, their collective influences giving birth to ever new crests on the waves? The possibility should also be taken into account that similarities in the mental structures of human beings have the impact that the same type of cultural manifestations emerge in different parts of the world as a response to similar phases of cultural development. The spread and birthing of folk poetry is not straightforward. Different chronological strata, the changing social circumstances and stages of ethnic groups shape how tradition spreads and is carried. Luckily, there has been a transition from the old evolutionistic illusions toward new types of syntheses. In his dissertation, Frog considers the possibility of a common mythological cycle in the Circum-Baltic area as an explanation for the similarities between various traditions. In the concluding chapter of his study, he mentions:

> If Lemminkäinen as a cultural figure were associated with a vernacular equivalent of a more wide-spread Circum-Baltic mythological cycle, this would present additional grounds for competition between these cultural figures associated with rival institutions of otherworld intermediary. However, the (potential) Circum-Baltic cycle may derive from an early stratum of Germanic contact which was carried independently into these various cultures. [...] the (potential) Circum-Baltic cycle may have such a long and complex history involved in the

> discourse between these cultures that even if its initial origin could be traced back to one culture, its persistence and evolution through the centuries cannot be reduced to any one culture but is dependent on that cross-cultural discourse. (Frog 2010: 362.)

It is difficult to demonstrate cross-cultural relationships between poems when the distances between the cultures are great and there are too few sources connected to one another. We can no longer ask Simana Sissonen or Arhippa Perttunen how they understood *The Song of Lemminkäinen*. In any case, the constant archaic features of epic narration are preserved in folk poems although the narrative goals and meanings would have transformed through the course of history.

In Lönnrot's *Kalevala*, Lemminkäinen enjoys a slightly different life than in the folk poems on which this epic work is based. In *Kalevala*, the hero is more glorified and more multifaceted in his actions. The humour of the folk poems on the one hand, and the austerity of their archaic image elements on the other, are not fully actualized in *Kalevala*, probably on purpose.

Translated by Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, Frog and Eila Stepanova

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Clive Tolley

On the Trail of Þórr's Goats

The Germanic-speaking inhabitants of early medieval Scandinavia lived in close proximity to Finno-Ugric peoples. In northern Scandinavia, and down through much of the central highlands, lived the Sámi; in Finland, the coastal regions of which appear to have been occupied from an early date by Germanic-speaking settlers, there dwelled both Finns and Sámi; on the eastern Baltic were to be found Estonians and, close to the trade route along the Dvina, the Livonians. Further afield, Scandinavians came into contact with many Finno-Ugric peoples, including the Hungarians, through whom they passed on their trading trips down through Russia to the Black Sea and Mediterranean. Our initial expectation may reasonably be that such contacts resulted in the sharing of aspects of culture, including tales; indeed, a number of studies have been devoted to this topic, with results affirming that such influence existed.[1]

Yet things may not always be so simple. In the present paper, I take one case-study to try to illustrate some of the complex questions that arise when we try to trace influences between cultures; the setting is Scandinavia and, in part, European Russia (hence the homeland of most Finno-Ugric peoples), and one of the motifs involved occurs among the Norsemen's neighbours, the Sámi. However, I seek to demonstrate that it is essential to consider the stratified and varied historical backgrounds that lie behind the end-product of recorded folktales, and hence to show that what at first sight look like remote cultures may be more likely sources for narrative motifs than those which are found next-door. I also wish to emphasise that the development of a narrative, particularly in the face of foreign influence, is not a random affair, and the motivation for the process of change should be investigated. The inference that I hope it will be found reasonable to draw from this is the need to exercise both caution and finesse when approaching questions of cultural contact and influence within the area occupied by Finno-Ugric and Germanic peoples. I should state at the outset, however, that the present essay does not attempt to be exhaustive in its treatment of the narrative in question, or to be more than suggestive. It may raise more questions than it answers: but that is the point. Future research will, no doubt, come to different conclusions.

Þórr's Visit to Útgarða-Loki

The great Icelandic historian and mythographer Snorri Sturluson, writing around the 1220s, tells a tale of the Norse god Þórr and one of his many encounters with giants, in this case the astonishingly massive masters of delusion Skrýmir and Útgarða-Loki (who turn out – or so Útgarða-Loki claims – to be one and the same); in summary, the tale, told at length in *Gylfaginning* ch. 45–47, relates:

> Þórr and Loki set off on a journey, and spend the night at a peasant's house. Þórr kills his own goats (his vehicle's draft animals) and cooks them, inviting the household to join him for a meal. He tells them to cast the bones onto the goat skins, which are set to one side. However, the farmer's son splits one bone open to get the marrow. In the early morning, Þórr blesses the animal remains with his hammer, and they rise up hale. However, one goat is lame: Þórr knows immediately someone has mistreated the bones, and raises his hammer, threatening the peasant's family, but is appeased by the offer to take the son and daughter, Þjalfi and Rǫskva, as his servants.
>
> Þórr leaves the goats behind, and sets off towards giantland with his new entourage, crossing a deep ocean to get there. As night approaches, they seek shelter, and find a large hall, its entrance as wide as the whole building on one side. At midnight they hear an earthquake, and in terror find a more sheltered side-chamber to rest in. Further rumblings are felt. In the morning, Þórr discovers a giant sleeping nearby and snoring – the cause of the nightly noise. He wakes up and says he is called Skrýmir, and asks if Þórr (whom he recognises) has been making off with his glove (the "hall" in which they have sheltered). Skrýmir and Þórr's company proceed together on their journey, the giant carrying all the provisions in his bag. He settles them all under an oak tree, and invites them to get on with their meal, while he goes to sleep. However, they are unable to open the magically sealed bag of the giant. In anger, Þórr strikes Skrýmir on the head with his hammer; the giant awakes and asks if a leaf has fallen on him. Þórr goes to sleep, but is awoken by the rumbling snoring, and again strikes the giant. Skrýmir again awakes, and asks if an acorn has struck him. Þórr remains vigilant, waiting for a third chance, which comes just before dawn; Skrýmir awakes and asks if the birds in the branches have dislodged some rubbish onto him. Skrýmir then parts from Þórr and his group, the giant setting off to the north, while the others go east.
>
> Þórr and his companions eventually come to an enormous castle, the abode of Útgarða-Loki, and squeeze their way in. They go up to Útgarða-Loki in his hall, who challenges them to fulfil some feats to earn their place in the hall. Loki contends with Logi in eating, Þjalfi with Hugi in a foot race, and Þórr first tries his skill at drinking, taking three swigs from the horn, then tries to lift the giant's cat, then has a wrestling match with the giant's old nurse Elli. Every exploit ends in failure for the divine party. Útgarða-Loki commiserates with their failure, while commenting that they seem a good deal less impressive than he was led to expect. Then, in the morning, once they are outside the castle, Útgarða-Loki reveals that Þórr has put all the race of giants in great fear, since his failures were far from being as ignominious as they looked – he has been deceived by the

> subterfuge of the giants. Thus the strokes against Skrýmir, who was Útgarða-Loki in disguise, have given rise to some mighty valleys in a range of mountains, and the contestants at the castle were personifications of Fire, Thought and Age, and the world serpent and the ocean, all of whom it was impossible to defeat, but against whom the gods made a valiant stand. Having told him this, the giant and his castle suddenly vanish from sight, and Þórr returns home.

Attestations of this myth are scarce outside *Gylfaginning*. Both Þjalfi and Rǫskva are mentioned in the poem *Þórsdrápa*, composed in the late 10th century by Eilífr Goðrúnarson, where Þórr makes a journey to the giant Geirrøðr, accompanied by Þjalfi. Útgarða-Loki is mentioned by Saxo Grammaticus (writing around 1208–1218) in his *Gesta Danorum*, book VIII. The myth is different but bears some points of similarity with Snorri's tale: the hero Thorkillus (whose name is based on Þórr) replaces the god; he first encounters a monstrous being in the wilderness, who directs him further on to find Utgarthilocus, a foul monster living shackled in a cave. Thorkillus and his men flee, but are almost wiped out by the venom of the serpents which attack them. Snorri's Útgarða-Loki has supernatural powers: he is able to deceive his visitors through concealment of his own person (disguising himself as Skrýmir) and of the nature of the tasks they undertake; these tasks relate to major cosmic forces, and we may be supposed to infer some control over these forces on Útgarða-Loki's part – though we are left wondering whether this inference is but one among the giant's deceits. One particular skill of Saxo's Utgarthilocus is mentioned: he is able to alter the weather, a characteristic sign of a magician, or of a controller of natural forces. Snorri's picture of the giant hence relies to an extent on tradition, though the precise extent and nature of Snorri's invention must remain unresolved.

Neither *Þórsdrápa* nor Saxo allude directly to the myth recounted by Snorri, and those references which do relate specifically to it cannot be shown to be wholly independent of Snorri. Thus in a verse in *Egils saga* ch. 24, Old Age is Þórr's wrestling companion ("Þórs fangvina"), but the saga is probably by Snorri.[2] There are several allusions in eddic poems which, though not by Snorri, were written down after his time and may have been revised in the light of his work. In *Lokasenna* 60, Loki rails at Þórr for cowering in the thumb of a glove during his journeys to the giantlands, and st. 62 presents Skrýmir's stubborn straps, which prevented Þórr from getting a meal. *Hárbarðsljóð* 39 mentions Þjalfi in passing, and st. 26 relates that Þórr was stuffed in a glove, too frightened to sneeze or fart in case Fjalarr (another giant name) might hear. *Hymiskviða* presents a confused set of passing mentions of elements of the myth: in st. 7 Þórr and his companion Týr set off for the giant Hymir, but leave the goats at Egill's (also a giant name) to be looked after. Having stolen a beer-brewing cauldron (the object of their mission), the gods retreat, pursued by the monstrous giants, and in st. 37 it is said that one of Þórr's goats became lame, the doing of Loki; st. 38 relates that Þórr got recompense from the giant (which one? and what for?) in the form of his two children.

The Structure of the Myth

In its structure, Snorri's narrative consists of two sections, the first an aetiological tale of why one of Þórr's goats is lame and how he came by his servants, the second the account of the adventure among the giants, which itself falls into two halves, the journey to Útgarðar and the contests there (with a concluding explanation of events). For the sake of convenience I will refer to these three parts as Þ1, Þ2 and Þ3 (corresponding to the three paragraphs of the summary). Narratively, there is little to connect Þ1 with Þ2/3 beyond the occurrence of Þjalfi in both, though John Lindow (2000) makes the important point that there is a recurrent theme of provision or refusal of food. It is clear that, at least from a narrative point of view, the goat-tale (Þ1) has been tacked onto the giant tale (Þ2/3);[3] the sudden disappearance of Rǫskva is thus explained: Þ1 has a typical protagonist threesome[4] of Þórr, Þjalfi and Rǫskva (the god and his two servants – paralleled by Þórr and his two draft goats; Loki plays no part here), while Þ2/3 has a threesome of Þórr, Loki and Þjalfi.[5] The two halves of Þ2/3, the Skrýmir and the Útgarða-Loki episodes, may themselves each have a separate origin, the main link being the somewhat artificial self-identification of Útgarða-Loki with the earlier Skrýmir, though, as noted below, analogues combine equivalent parts of the narrative as in the Norse tale.

Þ1 may itself be analysed further, though I leave a full consideration until later in the article. Two themes are combined, "How Þórr got his servants Þjalfi and Rǫskva" and "How Þórr's goat became lame", which were not necessarily originally connected: *Hymiskviða* allows for an interpretation of these as being two separate events, a tradition likely to lie also behind Snorri's kenning for Loki in *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 16, *þjófr hafrs* ['thief of the goat'], implying that Loki fulfilled a role otherwise taken by Þjalfi.

Snorri's tale exemplifies a narrative pattern which is found in other Norse myths, within which it should be contextualised; such an investigation has been undertaken by John McKinnell (1994: ch. 3). The additional texts he considers are *Þórsdrápa*, along with Snorri's expanded retelling of this in *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 18, and Saxo's account of Þórr's attack on Geruthus and his daughters in *Gesta Danorum* VIII; *Hymiskviða*; *Þorsteins þáttr bœjarmagns* ch. 4–12; Saxo's account (book VIII) of how Thorkillus took King Gorm to visit Geruthus; Saxo's account of Thorkillus' visit to Utgarthilocus (also book VIII). In outline (and simplifying somewhat), the narrative pattern may be described as follows: Þórr (or a human whose name is based on Þórr) sets off for the giant realm, accompanied by one or more companions, and has to cross a dangerous river or sea. He receives help from a friendly giantess. The realm of the giants is a place of intense cold or dark, and the hospitality offered there is poor or treacherous. There is a series of contests between Þórr and the giants, which Þórr wins, and the contest may involve the destruction of a house-pillar. As Þórr returns, he is pursued by the giants, and kills many of them.

The Resurrected Goats

The motif of the resurrected but lame animal appears to be unique in medieval Norse narratives. It can, however, be explained as a reflection of the reciprocity ideology of hunting societies of the north, whereby the hunter takes an animal from the wild, but returns it to the Master or Mistress of the Animals to be reborn, a process which requires the careful preservation and laying-out, in anatomical order, of its bones.[6] Such a notion is explicitly recorded among the Norsemen's neighbours, the Sámi;[7] Erich Johan Jessen (1767: 46), writing of a sacrificial meal among the Norwegian Sámi, notes:

> Naar nu alt det øvrige paa Offer-Stedet var blevet kogt, og af de indbudne Giester fortæret, sankede man alle Beenene tilsammen, og nedlagde dem, tillige med ovenmeldte afsondrede Deele, i deres naturlige Orden og Sammenheng, udi en Slags Liig-Kiste, som var giort af Birke-Bark: derpaa bestenkede og overstrøg man det med Blod; og i saadan Tilstand, hvor det først ansaaes for et ret og fuldkommet Offer, som af dennem kaldtes Damengare, begrove de det høytideligen i Jorden.
>
> Now when all the rest had been cooked at the place of sacrifice, and been consumed by the invited guests, they gathered all the bones together and laid them down along with the above-mentioned separated part [the penis] in their natural order and composition in a sort of coffin, which was made of birch bark. They sprinkled and daubed this with blood, and in this state – for only at this point was it seen as a correct and perfect offering, called by them *damengare* – they buried it in a celebratory fashion in the earth.

Jessen (1767: 47) notes that Horagalles, who was represented with a hammer to ward off witches and evil spirits, had a *damengare*, but the practice was not confined to worship of this Þórr-like god. Jessen (1767: 52–53) notes that if a *noaidi* (shaman) is asked why the bones were gathered together in such an orderly fashion for a *damengare*, he would answer:

> man troede, at Offerdyret fik igien af den Gud, som det blev ofret til, ey allene sit Kiød, Liv og sine Lemmer i fuld god Stand; men og blev det langt større og herligere, end som det var den Tiid, det her blev slagtet.
>
> It was believed that the sacrificial animal got back from the god to whom it was sacrificed not only its flesh, life and limbs in perfect shape, but that it would also be much stronger and nobler than it was at the time it was slaughtered.

This belief, Jessen notes, was strengthened by tales of animals that had supposedly been seen in Saiwo (the spirit realm, located up in the mountains or by sacred lakes), which they understood to be those that had been offered in sacrifice.

The most obvious suggestion would be that the Norsemen picked up the basis of Þ1 from their Sámi neighbours. Yet, despite the clear adherence of the Sámi to the principle of hunting reciprocity, no precisely comparable

motif appears to have existed among them in the form of a tale where a human's misdemeanour results in the animal being revived, but lame. A direct Sámi source remains viable, but it is legitimate to suggest the possibility of more distant sources too.

The Sámi sacrificial principles may be matched in other hunting societies, but the notion of a Master or Mistress of Animals also occurs outside purely hunting societies: in Greece, the goddess of hunters, Artemis, was called *potnia theron* ['Mistress of Animals'] (Homer, *Iliad* XXI.470), and within Celtic traditions several figures bear such characteristics. The most notable is the horned god, depicted widely in Gaul and Britain, generally termed (on the basis of one inscription) Cernunnos ['Horned One']; it is arguably Cernunnos who is the subject of one of the panels of the Gundestrup Cauldron, surrounded by the animals he guarded: the cauldron, found in Denmark, indicates the probability of interchange of Celtic and Germanic traditions in the Proto-Germanic period. Female goddesses such as the Welsh Rhiannon ['Great Queen'], and her antecedent Epona, goddess of horses, also exhibit certain features of the Mistress of the Animals.[8] Yet analogues need not be of a purely mythological nature, since motifs may be adapted into a mythological form from other types of narrative.

There are, then, several areas to consider in more detail. In what follows I present a summary and analysis of relevant portions of the research conducted on the analogues of the myth.

The Irish and West European Element

The classic investigation of analogues to the myth remains that of C. W. von Sydow (1910).[9] This is of great value in setting out many parallels, from medieval sources and from modern folk traditions, but in analytical terms von Sydow's study left a great deal open for future researchers. One might say that such is the breadth of presentation that it is difficult to see the wood for the trees. Moreover, von Sydow's inference of a "Celtic" origin to the Norse myth poses more questions than it solves – many of the analogues are not from areas that spoke Celtic languages when they were recorded, many areas of originally Celtic speech did not produce such analogues, and no consideration is given to the meaning of "Celtic" in cultural terms, or justification for supposing that such a coherent entity existed. Different parts of Snorri's tale may, moreover, have quite disparate origins; while von Sydow recognises this, his general inclination is simply to demonstrate the myth's supposed "Celtic" origin, rather than to engage in a dispassionate investigation of other possibilities. Further aspects of von Sydow's approach will strike modern readers as simplistic or outdated, such as the assumption that versions of a tale involving a god are older than ones involving a saint or Christ (von Sydow 1910: 101), or the failure either to trace folktale elements further than one step back (demonstrating an immediate source in, say, Ireland, does not constitute a thorough investigation of a motif's distribution), or to try to fathom why particular changes occur when a motif is borrowed from one culture to another.

We may, I think, dismiss von Sydow's vague notions of a "Celtic" area. Yet Ireland, Scotland, England and Normandy are united by one relevant factor: heavy Norse colonisation. The most obvious solution would be to see the motif as Norwegian, borrowed perhaps from the Sámi, and as having been spread by the Vikings.[10] In the case of Normandy, the area was colonised by Vikings only a few generations before the story is recorded, and Norse may still have been spoken around Bayeux in the 940s (Dudo, *History of the Normans*, p. 97). Yet it seems unlikely that the motif was either old enough, or well enough established in Scandinavia (we have only Snorri's tale to show its existence), to have given rise to such a plethora of examples. Moreover, as will be seen, analogues are found well outside any sphere of Viking activity, which leaves the Norsemen as unlikely protagonists in the spread of variants of the myth.

Þ3

In spite of the caveats, there are certainly strong parallels with tales recorded from areas which von Sydow designated "Celtic". Þ3 in particular has close analogues in Irish tales, recorded both from oral versions and from medieval writings. The treatment afforded by von Sydow has been considerably fleshed out and refined by Rosemary Power (1985). She notes that 91 oral versions of "An Óige, an Saol agus an Bás" ['Youth, the World and Death'] have been recorded from Gaelic-speaking areas, and a somewhat different version of the story is found in the episode "Oidhachtas Find co Teach Cuanna" ['The hospitality of Fionn in the house of Cuana'] within *Feis Tighe Chonáin*, a medieval work extant in manuscripts from the 16th century on (Power 1985: 219–220). The versions show considerable variation, but all present Fionn and his companions as staying in a stranger's house, where he encounters and contends with a series of personifications, such as Youth, the World or Death. Some, but not all, involve Old Age, and in some Death is personified as a cat; the medieval version has, instead of Youth, a young woman called Meanma, intellect, who moves faster than anything else.[11] It is typical of Irish tales that the castle (*bruidhean*) vanishes at the end of the episode.

There are also some notable differences from the Norse tale: in particular, the ram who overturns the table in the Irish tale, and which (at least in the oral versions) represents the World, is absent, although, as Power (1985: 255) points out, elements within the motif are recycled in the Norse tale – the fight over food (Loki and wildfire), contention with an animal (Þórr and the cat/world serpent), wrestling in which the hero is overcome (Þórr and Old Age).

Power's presentation adds weight to von Sydow's original argument for an Irish origin to Þ3. Some of the differences can be explained as adaptations to Norse tradition: thus contention with the world-serpent is brought in, for this is Þórr's traditional adversary at the end of the world (and is roughly equivalent to representing the world as a domesticated animal), and dealing with fire is a traditional motif of at least some of Þórr's visits to the giant world, as seen already in *Þórsdrápa*, where Þórr deals with Geirrøðr

by blasting him with a molten ingot (paralleling the Greek thunder god Zeus's *keraunos*).[12] Even the characterisation of the protagonists as gods against giants may be an adaptation to Norse tradition (giants are Þórr's traditional adversaries, and take on a symbolic significance as destroyers of the world), for, as Power (1985: 257–261) argues, the narrative makes more sense when it involves heroes contending with the ineluctable aspects of human existence, personified as supernatural beings. However, even if an Irish origin for the Norse tale is accepted, this does not preclude additional influences from elsewhere.

Þ2

There would also appear to be Irish influence in Þ2, though the case is less compelling here. At least the name of the magic knot, *grésjárn*, that Skrýmir uses to tie his bag up is Irish (Power 1985: 247, von Sydow 1910: 148); this may, but does not necessarily, imply that the narrative context derives in part from Irish tradition. Some aspects, such as the emphasis on the giant's speed, are common in Irish but not Norse sources (Power 1985: 248). Von Sydow (1910: 152) notes the parallel with an episode in the Finn cycle in which Finn with Conan and Caoilte are greeted by a giant, who joins their company and carries all the baggage on his back, moving very fast. In a reversal of roles between giant and heroes, as compared to the Norse tale, Conan ties a magic knot which only he can unbind. As in the Norse myth, this episode is the prelude to a further set of adventures (which do not parallel Þ3). There is no very close parallel in the blows delivered by Þórr on Skrýmir, or on the giant's glove as a shelter (Power 1985: 247). One important factor, noted by Power (1985: 247), is that in both Norse and Irish sources (such as the "Teach Cuanna"), the giant meets the heroes first outside the castle, and greets the leader by name even though they have never previously met. This indicates that narratives structurally parallel to Þ2 and Þ3 were already joined in Irish tradition, and may hence have been borrowed in such a union in Scandinavia.

Þ1

If we accept that Þ1 has little to do with Þ2/3, the linkage being fabricated by Snorri or shortly before, there is no reason to argue from the existence of Irish elements in Þ2/3 that a similar origin is likely for Þ1. Nonetheless, Irish and other parallels have been identified; their distribution suggested a general "Celtic" phenomenon to von Sydow. It has generally only been the motif of how Þórr's goat became lame that has come under consideration in analogue investigations, rather than the motif of how the thunder god got his servants.

In hagiographical writings, examples of animal resurrection are found in saints' lives from Ireland, Scotland, England and Normandy.[13] Some care should be taken, however, not to assume that all such instances form analogues to Þ1. The ability of saints to raise the departed goes back to Christ, and is a universal hagiographical feature; its application to animals,

the mainstay of a farming community's livelihood,[14] is merely an extension of this idea.[15] It is only when we have the additional feature of the need to preserve the bones that we can begin to talk of analogues, and this feature is absent from most lives, including the Irish. It does occur, however: for example, in the Gaelic life of St Colum Cille (Columba) the saint cooked a whole ox for the hero Mael Uma, then had its bones gathered together, and brought it back to life (Alexander 2008: 82). One example (von Sydow 1910: 96), particularly close to the Norse tale, recounts how in the building of a cathedral in Ulster a saint provides the masons with a cow to eat each day, which is brought back to life after the saint assembles the bones on its hide; one day, it returns lame, after a mason has crushed one of its limb bones, which, his crime revealed, he confesses to the saint, who notes that it is good he confessed, as otherwise he would have been killed by a stone falling from the edifice in its final stages of construction.

One of the earliest analogues, however, occurs not in Irish sources but in the *Historia Brittonum* of the British[16] writer Nennius, composed around 800. He relates an incident in the life of St Germanus, who visited Britain in 429; the incident is not found in the life of St Germanus by Constantius, written in Gaul a few years after the saint's death, so it must be derived from some now lost later writings or traditions. In ch. 32, Nennius tells how Germanus attempted to visit a wicked king called Benlli to preach to him, but the king refused; his good-hearted servant, however, invited the saint to dine with him, but had only a cow and calf: he served up the calf, but Germanus asked for the bones to be kept unbroken, and the next day the calf was found with its mother alive and well. The same miracle is reported in the late 9th century by Heiric of Auxerre in his *Miracula sancti Germani* (book I, ch. 8), but with the additional detail that the bones of the calf should be carefully arranged on the hide (but Heiric omits the detail that no bones should be broken); as Maurizio Bertolotti (1991: 51) argues, both Nennius and Heiric must be reliant on a *Liber sancti Germani*, containing a fuller account from which each derives a differing selection of details. An obvious observation to make here is that Nennius (or the now lost *Liber*) could well be the source of the motif in the Irish lives, most of which do not exist in versions committed to writing before the 13th century, and which form a genre of writing that is notable for its derivativeness. This is a matter that awaits investigation: the possibility that the Irish versions of the motif may not be an established folk tradition must be borne in mind, with the implication that they would not provide such an easy source for the Norse motif as von Sydow would like to assume.[17]

The fullest example of the motif in England occurs in the life of St Werburgh, which is recorded in an 11th-century version, and a 12th-century version by William of Malmesbury in his *De gestis pontificum Anglorum* IV.172. William records that the saint resurrected a goose which had been eaten by her servant; the outline of the motif in this tale follows the general narrative pattern under consideration here, but the emphasis is different, for the saint uncovers the crime not by observing something such as a missing bone, but from the behaviour of the remaining geese, *quae se integras non esse scirent* ['who knew they were not complete'] – it is an injury to the

communitas, not an individual, that is the focus.[18] The goose motif occurs in other similar tales recorded in 10th- to 13th-century saints' lives from Flanders and Burgundy. Dominic Alexander (2008: 106–107) points out that the closest parallel occurs in two (probably related) Norman lives, of St Vigor of Bayeux and St Opportuna of Sées (in southern Normandy); the first is from the 11th century, and the goose miracle of the latter is probably 12th century, but survives only in a redaction of the 13th or 14th century. While the motif-complex is maintained in tale variants, the relationship between motifs is subject to constant refinement; thus in the St Vigor version, the servant eats the one goose which is singled out as lame; in the Opportuna version, the resurrected goose is lame owing to a bone having been broken. Alexander outlines how, unlike the Irish examples, the goose-miracle tales involve a trading by the birds of obedience for protection, and in this, as well as the unwitting *faux pas* by the servant, there is a direct similarity to the Norse tale, where the goats have yielded their freedom to become draft animals, but are protected by the god, even when surreptitiously eaten by a servant, or, in the Norse case, someone who becomes a servant as a result of his transgression. On the other hand, the goose resurrection, as a subtype distinct from the Norse goat resurrection, implies any connection between the traditions is at best weak.

Any consideration of analogues to Þ1 has to confront the structural anomaly in the tale noted above. In his presentation of the hagiographical analogues, von Sydow distinguished two types: Type I tales involve a saint or Christ visiting a host and eating and then resurrecting the host's (only) animal, whereas Type II tales involve the divine/saintly personages raising their own animals, but without any hospitality being involved (other than, for example, between the saint and his or her servant). He made the supposition that the Norse combination of these motifs represented a lost Celtic form (von Sydow 1910: 105). In terms of strengthening his argument for a "Celtic" origin, this is of course circular: the truth is that there is some distance between the Celtic and Norse narratives, and von Sydow's attempt to foist the structure of the Norse myth onto a supposed Irish antecedent should be resisted, since not only is there no evidence for the existence of such a version, but it would also be unmotivated by any narrative demands within the Irish tradition.

Knowledge of both types of hagiographical tale may have contributed to the development of the Norse myth, though the aspect of the hospitality offered by a friendly family is easily explained in terms of Norse tradition; hence the hagiographical type II, and particularly the St Werburgh type, seems a more likely source of inspiration, to which the hospitality motif, derived from elsewhere (the visits of gods to mortals), has been added. However, as von Sydow (1910: 96) notes, type II tales are usually combined with a builder motif, which the Norse is not, and also the saint acts alone, whereas Þórr is accompanied by Loki. The precise nature of the Irish influence therefore remains opaque.

Northern Russian Tales

Further elements in the Norse group of myths concerning Þórr's visits to the giant realm are paralleled in Northern Russian tales. Nora K. Chadwick (1964) analyses some of these features, in particular in tales of Svjatogor, a giant, a being burdened with cares who is a central figure of northern Russian traditional *bylina* poems. Chadwick notes similarities such as the following, derived from different tales of Svjatogor: *a*) Ilja Muromec rouses Svjatogor from sleep with repeated blows, and the giant thrusts him into his bag; this is a chronological reversal of what happens in Norse, where Þórr takes refuge in the giant's glove, then wakes Skrýmir with repeated blows, and Þórr rather than the giant is responsible for the sojourn in the unusual shelter; *b*) Svjatogor invites Ilja to visit his father, telling him not to shake hands, but to place a heated bar of iron in his hand, at which the old giant exclaims at the fierceness of the grip, recalling the contest in *Þórsdrápa* when Þórr and Geirrøðr cast molten iron at each other; *c*) in *Þorsteins þáttr bœjarmagns* Þorsteinn hides in an oak as the giant approaches, and in one Russian tale, Ilja does the same; *d*) Skrýmir awakens, seizes the glove Þórr had slept in, and fraternises with the god as they proceed on their journey, as Svjatogor carries the wallet and fraternises with Ilja as they travel on; *e*) both the Norse and Russian giants do the carrying of bags, and their speed is commented on; *f*) Þórr is unable to open the giant's bag; in one *bylina*, Svjatogor is unable to lift a peasant's bag (which is said to contain the whole world); *g*) while Svjatogor sleeps in a tent under an oak, Ilja makes love with the giant's wife nearby, which Chadwick regards as parallel to Skrýmir sleeping nearby the glove that Þórr and his companions take refuge in; *h*) Svjatogor's end is brought about when he is tricked into trying out a stone coffin, which is closed over him and sealed with iron bars; this corresponds to the picture of Útgarða-Loki (Utgarthilocus) in Saxo's account, shackled and bound beneath a mountain (and Svjatogor ostensibly means "Holy mountain"), and in a different way to the magical iron bonds which seal the food-bag in Snorri's myth.

A weakness of Chadwick's treatment is that she picks motifs from a number of different *bylina*s and prose tellings without much consideration of the integrity of any particular versions, and some of the comparisons are in any case rather weak. Perhaps the strongest points of similarity are the giant's pouch as a container for the hero, and the power of iron to defeat giants, both when red-hot, and in the form of shackles or bonds. One possible scenario – but the proposal must remain tentative in the extreme – is that the Vikings supplemented tales of Þórr's visits to the giants with motifs derived from the area around the northern end of the Rus trade route, in a fictionalised version of which area, indeed, both Geirrøðr and Útgarða-Loki appear to dwell. It is also possible, however, that the elements in question in the Russian tales are the result of Slavic (perhaps taken over from earlier Finnic) borrowings of motifs derived from Scandinavian tales told within the Rus area.[19]

The Caucasian Element

The possible relevance of Northern Russian tales illustrates that an approach to the Norse myth is called for with a broader scope than elucidating merely the parallels with Irish tradition, which have rather dominated the comparative work previously undertaken. I would like to broaden the study now to further areas of European Russia and surrounds, taking up some remarks of Martin West and a study by Leopold Schmidt, which concern traditions from the Caucasus region. The elements of interest here do not overlap with the Northern Russian elements just considered.

Þ2/3

Oddly, a tale similar to Þ2/3 is found among the Ossetes, living a great distance from Scandinavia, in the Caucasus region. In his recent broad-ranging study of Indo-European poetry and myth, West (2007: 298–301) takes up the comparison with the Norse; he summarises one version of the tale thus:[20]

> A group of Narts [heroes] on a long expedition, overtaken by night, bed down in what they take to be a cave. In the morning they find that it was the shoulderblade (or in another version the skull) of an enormous giant from a past age. They pray to God for the owner of the skeleton to come back to life, only blind so that he cannot harm them. The prayer is granted. The Narts enquire of the resuscitated ogre how the giants used to compete with one another. He invites one of them to stand on one side of the valley, and he will throw a rock at him from the other side. Soslan sets his cloak on the hillside, shouts that he is ready, and makes himself scarce. The blind giant hurls a large rock at the voice and flattens the cloak. The Narts tell him that he has killed a man, which pleases him greatly. [....] After the rock-throwing episode they ask him further about what giants used to eat. He takes a huge fistful of earth and squeezes the juice out of it: that was the giants' food. He then rubs some of it on their brows and those of their horses, whereupon they fall into a deep sleep. On waking they pray to God to turn the giant back into a skeleton, and the Deity obliges.

West (2007: 302) sums up the similarity with the Norse tale:

> The Norse story is much the more detailed, and it contains much that is absent from the Ossetic. But there is a common scheme. A party of adventurers from 'our' world enters Giantland, is benighted, and takes shelter in what they think to be a cave or building. In the morning they discover that it is part or appurtenance of a giant, of a quite different order of magnitude from what the corresponding thing would be among us. The giant to whom it belongs is roused from death or slumber and dialogue ensues. The parties are curious about each other's habits and competitive abilities, which are put to the test. Finally the giant disappears and the travellers return home to tell the tale.

What inference is to be drawn from this similarity? We may note to begin with that it is less than exists between the Irish and Norse analogues. Yet this does not preclude it from being an analogue, and possibly a source. Any link – if such there be – is either genetic, with both tales originating in one predecessor which has been inherited both in Norway (and thence to Iceland) and in the Caucasus, or else a result of borrowing. The differences are such as to exclude any literary connection, but an oral link is feasible. As with the Irish parallels, the supposition of a parallel existing between the Norse and Ossetic tales relies on seeing Þ2/3 as a unity.

West (2007: 302) favours a genetic connection between the Norse and Ossetic tales, and concludes that the hypothetical original version most likely reflects a late, regional Indo-European tale illustrating the nature of giants. Yet, while we may accept the premise that Ossetic and Norse may both preserve ancient Indo-European traditions, the survival over several millennia of such a light-weight tale in just two distantly related branches of Indo-European seems unlikely in the extreme, particularly given that the Norse tale does not in fact focus upon the nature of giants (their hugeness – excessive even for giants – being a source of comedy in the tale, but not its main theme). The inclination might therefore be to dismiss the similarities as chance, and discount any real connection. However, recognition of the value of Ossetic tales as preserving much from primitive Indo-European tradition, and comparison between Norse and Ossetic tales, have a good pedigree: Axel Olrik (1922: ch. 5, esp. 287–290) argued that Loki bound in punishment beneath a mountain, after his engineering of the death of Baldr, was of Caucasian origin (specifically Ossetic tale variants are mentioned on pp. 141–145, 152, 165, 170–171), where tales of Promethean giant figures peopling the mountains abound (and whence, indeed, the figure of Prometheus bound itself may have originated, according to Olrik); the image of the bound wolf Fenrir may be traced to a similar origin, he argues (Olrik 1922: ch. 6). Olrik regarded the Goths of the 4th to 5th centuries as mediators of the folktale motifs to the north.[21]

That Ossetic parallels exist with Norse myth even down to detailed levels was an argument favoured by the great comparative mythologist Georges Dumézil, though he regarded the parallels as derived from shared Indo-European heritage, the line followed by West, and not as borrowed, as Olrik did (e.g. Dumézil 1986: 198). Dumézil's structuralist approach led him both to point out the close similarity between the tales of Loki and Baldr in Norse and Syrdon and Soslan in Ossetian, and to regard the tales as having maintained this structure as a result of shared inheritance (e.g. Dumézil 1986: 194–203). It was part of Dumézil's agenda to establish the existence of particular mythic structures within Proto-Indo-European society, and to trace the realisation of these structures in succeeding cultures: he was predisposed to look unfavourably on notions that such structures, or narratives, could share close similarities across cultures as a result of borrowing, and as a result he exaggerates the difficulties involved in borrowing having taken place between the Caucasus and Scandinavia. Objectively, it seems far from unlikely that points of comparison exist between the traditions both as a result of inheritance from Proto-Indo-

European myths, and from much later borrowing. Olrik presented one scenario by which borrowing might take place, and I broaden the investigation into the historical background further below.

Þ1

Tales paralleling Þ1 are found in the Caucasus region among the Ossetes and their neighbours. A reasonably close analogue is provided by Schmidt (1952: 525);[22] here Azvapsa or Adagwa, a Master of the Animals, grants hunters prey at the request of his three daughters; he and his family also live on prey, and the bones are set out on the hide after the flesh is eaten, and the animal comes back to life. Kevin Tuite (1997: 13) notes that this occurs when the divinity strikes the hide with a stick, or pronounces an invocation. Any bones that get lost (in some versions a bone is stolen by a hunter that chances on the feast) are replaced by wooden parts.

Tuite (1997: 14) notes that in some versions, as recorded for example in the Karakorum mountains, a hunter is invited by the "protectors", fairy beings, to share a feast of ibex (closely similar to a goat); the hunter hides a rib bone. After the meal, the fairies gather the bones and replace the missing rib with one of juniper, and revive the animal. The hunter later kills the revived animal, discovering the wooden bone replacement.[23]

Þórr and his companions correspond broadly to Azvapsa and his daughters, while Þjalfi's family are agrarian versions of hunters beseeching the deities for game, or invited to their feast. Like the Norse, the Caucasian example involves a number of divine beings, and stresses how both the Master of Animals and his family and the hunters who beseech him live on the game he deigns to provide; the hunters stand in the same relation to him as Þjalfi and his family do towards the gods, as favoured guests (in some sense). In his illicit seizing of the leg bone, Þjalfi corresponds to the chance hunter-thief of some Caucasian tales.

As noted, the motif of animal resurrection occurs elsewhere in Europe than merely in the Norse tale, and some of its manifestations, particularly the goose-resurrection subtype, appear closer to the traditions of hunting societies. Thus the female saint with power over her game corresponds to the Mistress of the Animals – a rather more common figure than the Master (a good example is the wife of Tapio, the god of the wild in Finnish tradition: see Pentikäinen 2007: 68–71) – who has to be approached and appeased by the hunter (corresponding to the saint's servant) so that she will grant the capture of some of her animals. Possibly the hagiographers have here simply combined motifs in such a way that, by chance or intentionally (an evangelical manipulation of a pagan motif seen as having value when reinterpreted from a Christian resurrectional perspective), the result comes to reflect the ancient concerns of a hunting society whilst serving as a vehicle for a particular form of Christian message, but it is also arguable that the motif is an adaptation, in a different sort of society, of a motif derived ultimately from actual hunting societies.

Outside the British/Irish saints' lives, the motif occurs also in folktales of the Alpine region (and sometimes elsewhere). A set of such analogues

– all from the Alps except one from Devon in England and one from Brittany – is cited by von Sydow (1910: 83–88). Schmidt (1952) considers such tales in more detail, relating them to the figure of the Master of the Animals, and sees their origin as being in tales of the Caucasus region (or the nearby steppe) like those just mentioned. The typical form of the Alpine mythologem is that supernatural beings are found to be consuming cattle at night, and returning them to life the next day: a human encounters them, and either keeps back one of the bones, or eats a portion of flesh, and the restored animal is found to be lame in this part of its anatomy (typically the thigh bone). As the Alps were outside the Viking sphere of influence, antecedents of these tales are unlikely to have been a direct influence on the Norse tales; moreover, they differ in making a sharp distinction between the spirits and the humans, so the human transgressor appears more as an intruder than a guest, and in the supernatural protagonists being female.

Analogous motifs also occur in northern Italian witch trials. Maurizio Bertolotti (1991: 42): notes in particular the trial in 1519 in Modena of Zilia, who recounted that at a witches' sabbat an ox was eaten, then the bones were gathered on the hide "and the mistress of the sabbat, arriving at last, beat on the ox's hide with a staff, and the ox appeared to come to life again"; Bertolotti goes on to document various instances of the motif of the Mistress of the Animals in this region.

The implication is either of a widespread survival of motifs originating in a hunting culture from palaeolithic times up to the Middle Ages,[24] or else of a network of narrative contacts reaching from the Caucasus across into Western Europe; in the case of the myth under consideration, such contacts could have supplemented traditions derived both from Scandinavia and from the west (Ireland and neighbouring lands). The palaeolithic hypothesis calls for the preservation over an immense stretch of time of motifs which ceased to relate to the primary *modus vivendi* of the societies in question; the inherent difficulties of the hypothesis at least leave plenty of room for a consideration of a diffusionist hypothesis. The historical background to the proposed narrative contacts therefore calls for some consideration.

Peoples of the Steppe

The Ossetes are now a small people, who have come to attention of late for occupying part of the sovereign territory of Georgia, backed by the military might of Russia. The Ossetes of South Ossetia are indeed latecomers to the region, if a matter of several centuries is counted as "late". The Ossetes are in fact the last surviving remnant of the once mighty Alans – one of a number of tribes that migrated from the steppe into Europe in antiquity and the early medieval period,[25] an ongoing process that establishes a strong connection between the wider Caucasus area and central Europe, including Germanic-speaking lands. Such migrations stretch back well beyond recorded history; indeed, the Indo-European languages themselves were almost certainly brought to Europe and India in a series of such incursions from the steppe several millennia ago.[26] At the time of Herodotus in the 5th century BC, the

Scyths formed the main body of steppe-dwellers to impact upon the Greek world. The Scyths were succeeded (and overrun) by the Sarmatians, who like the Scyths were an Iranian-speaking group of tribes. These occupied lands as far as the Danube and pressed upon the Greek and Roman world's borders for many centuries. Closely related to the Sarmatians were the Alans, who from around the 1st to the 4th centuries AD controlled the tribes of the steppe between the Don in the west and the Aral Sea in the east, and hence the trade routes from the Black Sea to the east; groups of them are mentioned already in Roman sources of the 1st century, such as Seneca, as living beyond the Danube. The Alans were pressed by the Huns (probably a largely Turkic-speaking confederacy) from the east, but then allied with them and sometimes with others, and moved into Europe in a complex series of migrations. They were perhaps the last example of a predominantly Iranian-speaking group of peoples to invade Europe, most forcefully in the 4th century AD (many lesser raids had taken place over the preceding few centuries) (Maenchen-Helfen 1973: 19). Incursions into Europe, by Huns, Avars, Hungarians and others, continued sporadically; the last of such warrior hordes descending from the steppe were the Mongol invaders of the 13th century AD; after this, Russia became a significant power, and the direction of incursion switched around as European Slavs conquered and in due course occupied all of northern Eurasia.[27]

One group of Alans and Vandals (a Germanic-speaking tribe), fleeing the Huns and leaving Pannonia, was settled in Noricum and Raetia at the end of the 4th century; they began predatory activities in the area, and were moved on. Gregory of Tours picks up the story of one of these groups, mentioning how in 406 the Alan king, Respendial, ensured victory for his Vandal allies fighting against the Franks on the Rhine. Gregory also relates that another group of Alans, led by Goar, crossed into Gaul at about the same time and settled there, making an alliance with the Roman authorities (Bachrach 1973: 51–54, 59–64). (*Historia Francorum* II.9.) These Alans were settled in various parts of the country, notably near Rheims, Orléans and Valence (see map in Bachrach 1973: 70). Another group of Alans, allied with the Visigoths (another Germanic-speaking people) before turning against them, was settled between Toulouse and the Mediterranean in 414, and yet another group appears to have attached itself to the tribe of Burgundians (again, Germanic-speaking) settled by Aetius in Savoy after 443, living to the west and south of Lake Geneva (Bachrach 1973: 29–30, 68–69). Alans had previously allied themselves with the Burgundians under their king, Gundaharius, to raise Jovinus to the imperial throne in 411.

Goar's successor, Sangiban, helped repel the Huns under Attila at the battle of Catalaunia in 453 (Bachrach 1973: 66). After this, the Alans fade away as an independent people in Gaul. Alans also played a significant part in eastern European (particularly Byzantine) politics; thus the Alan leader Aspar, son of Ardaburius, a general in the Byzantine army, was offered the imperial throne in 450, but he preferred to place Marcian in this position, and to control imperial politics through him. The mixed ethnic connections of the Alans are epitomised in the way Aspar took three wives, and had three sons, the first, Ardaburius, with an Alan name, the second, Patricius, with

a Latin name, and the third, Hermanaric, with a Gothic name (possibly a reflection of the mothers' ethnicities). Aspar maintained the support of Alans living on the steppe up into what is now the Ukraine. (Bachrach 1973: 42–50.) Those Alans who remained on the steppe formed, between the 9th and 12th centuries, a network of alliances which culminated in the Christian kingdom of Alania. The steppe-dwelling Alans were forced by the Mongols in the 13th century into the Caucasus, where their descendants survive as the Ossetes.

The Huns posed one of the greatest threats to the late Roman Empire. The central core of the Huns were probably Turkic-speaking, though their hordes included many previously overrun peoples such as the Alans; their origins, and the ethnic and linguistic background of the tribes of which they were made up, are uncertain. Be that as it may, by the 5th century AD, having moved *en masse* from regions beyond the Black Sea to the Hungarian Plain, they had come to occupy, rule or at least heavily influence a huge swathe of eastern Europe, from the Baltic in the north down to the Black Sea, and as far west as the Rhine (Heather 1996: ch. 4). Most Germanic peoples thus came under their suzerainty,[28] at least until the death of Attila in 453, after which Hunnish power rapidly evaporated. Many Goths, and other Germanic peoples, served as forced allies of the Huns for a number of decades; the relationship was ambiguous, but close, as is indicated by the many Gothic names adopted by Huns (including Attila and his brother Bleda), by the Goths' adoption of Hunnish customs such as artificial skull-lengthening, or chieftains' hugging in public (Wolfram 1988[1979]: 257). The relationship, close but full of contempt, is summed up in an aetiological tale of the Goths (Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum* XXIV), according to which the witches called Haliurunnae ['dealers in hellish secrets' (probably)] were expelled by an early Gothic king, whereupon they begat the Huns upon the evil spirits of the steppe.[29]

The Narrative Effects of the Migrations

The deeds of the Migration Age Burgundian princes, the interaction between the Goths and Huns and the circumstances of the collapse of Hunnish rule gave rise to a tradition of heroic verse within the Germanic-speaking world,[30] a tradition which survives most fully in the German *Nibelungenlied*, and in Icelandic in the poems of the *Poetic Edda*, as well as in sources such as *Þiðreks saga* (itself of German origin), and *Hlǫðskviða*, the "Battle of the Goths and Huns" (which is included in *Hervarar saga*); some of the story motifs of *Hlǫðskviða* and its prose setting surely stem from Hunnish–Gothic contact, notably the sword Tyrfingr, symbol of the Gothic people (whom classical writers named the Tervingi, without showing any awareness of any symbolic sense), which stands as a parallel to the sword discovered and drawn from the earth by a peasant, which symbolised the power of the Hunnish king Attila in one of the few Hunnish stories preserved (Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum* XXXV; cf. Maenchen-Helfen 1973: 278–280).[31] As far as Alans are concerned, it is entirely feasible that, given their

intermingled history alongside the Burgundians, Alan traditions were also passed down, particularly as their allies the Burgundians are presented as heroes in the poetic tradition (unlike the dastardly Huns).

Turning to the historical sources, we find they contain remarkably little relating to religion or myth, so that, leaving aside the evidence of heroic verse just considered, we can scarcely do more than point out the inherent likelihood of the close contact with steppe peoples having resulted in the borrowing of some religious and mythic motifs or practices, particularly as certain cultural practices, such as the artificial skull-lengthening noted above, are recorded as having spread from the Huns to their Gothic subjects (see also Görman 1993). A full consideration of the question of possible influences would require a deeper investigation not only of written sources, but also of archaeological evidence, and such art-work as has survived, than can be undertaken here. Even if such an investigation were undertaken, however, the results would most likely be highly tentative, given that the paucity of written source materials and the difficulty in interpreting non-written ones precludes our saying much of a specific nature about the beliefs of these early steppe-dwellers. Yet we may be certain that, at least on occasion, the beliefs of the erstwhile steppe-dwellers were tenacious, even after they had settled in Europe. For example, the Alans are described by Ammianus Marcellinus and Claudius Marius Victor as having a primitive religion which involved ancestor-worship and prophetic rites (Bachrach 1973: 21–22, 31–32); Victor is here describing the customs of Alans living not far from his native Marseille, who had been allies of the Goths for a good three decades without abandoning their pagan beliefs, which they moreover obviously continued within the settled environment of southern Gaul.

On the other hand, the movements of peoples are disruptive events, not designed to ensure the preservation of traditions intact; this is compounded by the great mix of races which appear to have composed the steppe hordes. Thus, it is more likely that *elements* of traditions, rather than integral and complex practices, would pass among the peoples brought together by these great movements. Nonetheless, not all ethnic contacts were of this disruptive kind. When the Goths settled along the Black Sea litoral from the 2nd century, they absorbed the local population, at least some of which was Iranian-speaking, the successors of the Scyths and Sarmatians, and close relatives of the nearby Alans. That the Goths may have absorbed more than a little from this Iranian-speaking substrate, or from the neighbouring Alans, is indicated by the occurrence of Iranian names among some of their later leaders, such as Safrax (Maenchen-Helfen 1973: 22). We can only surmise that they may also have absorbed religious practices or mythic motifs.[32]

Following Schmidt's (1952: 537) proposal of a connection with the steppe as being implied in the motifs particularly of Þ1, it is most relevant to bear in mind the incursions of the Alans, followed soon after by the Huns, either of whom could have brought appropriate tales with them.[33] Both of them reached the Alpine area, the Alans in particular settling to the east of the Alps in Pannonia (modern western Hungary, approximately), and then briefly in Noricum and Raetia (roughly Austria and Switzerland); another branch was settled in northern Gaul, close to Armorica, whither, indeed,

numbers of them migrated by the 6th century (Bachrach 1973: 79–80). This would explain the continental distribution rather neatly, and would seem to be of the right age and spread to explain the somewhat diffuse nature of the motif. From these areas, the motif could well have spread; the early Irish monasteries on the continent – most of which were established between the 6th and early 8th centuries – offer an obvious line of transmission, leading ultimately back to Ireland, even if it cannot be demonstrated that the motif became associated with saints in the Alpine region; it may be no more than coincidence that perhaps the greatest of these monasteries, Bobbio, was established by St Columbanus (d. 615) in Lombard territory in northern Italy, not long after the Lombards settled the area in 568, after they had abandoned their former homeland in Pannonia – close to where the Alans had settled, and where a concentration of the resurrected animal tales is found.[34]

The examples in England, particularly those of St Werburgh, could have come from the northern area of France (assuming the continental tales existed a good deal earlier than their first documentation).[35] There would still remain the much earlier example from Nennius concerning St Germanus, also set in or close to what would become England. It must remain a possibility – especially if Nennius' source was insular – that there existed a traditional motif in Britain of the resurrected animal, whose integrity relied on preserving the bones, i.e. the same motif as is characteristic of remote hunting societies.[36] Yet one of the extraordinary facts about Germanus, other than his being probably the only person who can actually be named as coming to Britain in the decades following the withdrawal of the Roman armies in 410, is that he was directly involved in resisting the invading Alans under their leader Goar[37] in Gaul, and he died in Ravenna, petitioning the emperor for leniency for the people of Armorica, against whom Aetius had dispatched the Alans on a punitive expedition (Constantius, *Vita Germani*, ch. 28, 40). Has a motif of originally Alan origin become associated with the saint in later tradition through his close dealings with them?[38]

Both Þ1 and Þ2/3, in the form in which they are preserved in Snorri's myth, may be explained, at least in part, as having an ultimate origin among the Alans or their neighbours. Three broad periods seem possible. An origin on the steppe from very ancient, Proto-Indo-European times, seems unlikely unless we accept a high level of motif integrity over huge time-spans. The tales could conceivably have hitched a ride during the Migration Period with the Alans to the Germanic lands,[39] yet Norway (assuming Snorri to have derived his tale thence) is rather distant from any sphere of direct Alan influence. The third, and most likely, possibility is that the link is of a yet more recent nature. It is easy to find such a connection. Until the Mongol invasions overran the steppe, the Ossetes occupied lands around the lower reaches of the Don (the Ossetian word for "river"), which flows into the Black Sea and is one of the major avenues along which the Viking Rus passed from the north down to the Mediterranean from around the 9th century, maintaining a trading network that existed for several centuries.[40] Norsemen were thus in direct contact with ancestors of the Ossetes over a considerable period, engaged in trade along this important route. An

antecedent of Þ2/3 could have been picked up just a couple of centuries or so before Snorri wrote it down. Any argument about the connection between the Ossetic and Norse motifs must take into account the gap of several centuries between their being recorded: the Ossetic variant could potentially have been very different in the 9th or 10th century, but this very fact favours any argument which seeks to close the gap to a minimum (even if we are still left with having to assume that Ossetic tradition was highly conservative for the argument to hold water at all).

Adaptation of Motifs

In the course of its history, a narrative will change as a result of shifts in perspective on the part of the tellers; this change may manifest itself in many ways, including lending different emphases to particular motifs, adopting new ones, including from foreign traditions, and realigning episodes. Euhemerisation of myth or mythologising the heroic, as is implied in the suggested adoption of Ossetic or Irish heroic/hagiographical material to a tale about Þórr, may also bring about significant adaptations. McKinnell (1994: ch. 3) shows that Snorri's myth has a very particular perspective: it is a satirical treatment of the wider mythic narrative which was outlined above in the section on the myth's structure. It therefore presupposes the existence of a conventional (non-satirical) version in earlier tradition. Snorri's treatment adds levels of subtlety: in a subversion of the normal pattern, the giants here are jovial, doing all they can to be helpful (and the sinister appearance of their dwelling place is no longer evident) – though this conviviality finally turns out to have been subterfuge and pretence; the helpful giantess has disappeared, to be replaced by the harmless-looking nurse, Old Age, who far from helping Þórr in fact defeats him; Þórr is now no longer the triumphant hero, but is the butt of mockery for his weakness, and his final victory over the pursuing giants vanishes – like the castle in which they dwell. The house pillar, which may originally have had a religious significance, has disappeared.[41]

Loki's part in the narrative is worth remarking on. On the one hand, his role is notable for its subdued quality; the only episode in which he really takes an active role is in contending with Logi ['Wildfire'], and this may derive from the similarity in their names. Yet on the other hand, the god has a namesake in Útgarða-Loki, whose role by contrast is far from subdued. Loki's "dual presence",[42] dealt with by Snorri by disidentifying Útgarða-Loki from Loki, implies different strands in the formation of the narrative, one of them selecting Loki as the companion of Þórr into the giant realm (as in Þjóðólfr of Hvinir's *Haustlǫng*, for example), the other drawing on traditions of the bound magician Loki in the wilderness (as seen in Saxo's version of Utgarthilocus)[43] – which, as noted, parallels myths of a Promethean being fettered to a Caucasian mountain. Now Loki is the traditional trickster god, and his presence tends to forebode some sort of trouble that his actions will bring about – for example, in *Haustlǫng* he promises the youth-bestowing goddess Iðunn away to giantland.[44] The trickster role is given to the "other"

Loki, Útgarða-Loki (and to Skrýmir, with whom Útgarða-Loki identifies himself) in Snorri's myth, so Loki's trickster role has no part to play; one possible reason for this shift is that the outcome of the myth is not misfortune for the gods (as takes place, for example, in *Haustlǫng*), but an increase of wisdom.

In considering arguments that Snorri's version of the myth incorporates elements drawn from non-indigenous traditions, it is important to consider how the use of foreign analogues may have contributed to the moulding of a particular perspective: in other words, to view their use not as random, but as a deliberate choice made in order to emphasise, in this case, the satirical element, a process which moreover may involve adapting the source material for this purpose.[45] It is worth mentioning some specific examples. *a*) The use of the vanishing castle motif, which may well be Irish, instead of the traditional slaughter of the giants, is a reflection of the emphasis that Þórr is unable to defeat the forces represented by the giants, so it is inevitable that the final battle has to be removed from the mythologem, with the giants slipping from his grasp; the Irish motif offered the opportunity to mould the narrative in this direction. *b*) The glove is probably an indigenous Scandinavian feature, judging from its occurrence in Danish folktales (von Sydow 1910: 157), and in the Old English *Beowulf* (set in Denmark), where the giant Grendel is said to have a glove in which he could poke his human prey (*Beowulf* 2085–2091).[46] It could be viewed as a specialised form of the giant's bag, such as is found in Northern Russian *bylina*s, where the hero is stuffed in it. The satire of Snorri's version is in fact increased here by the use of a specifically indigenous element, rather than the more general bag found elsewhere, and relies to an extent on a knowledge that giants would stuff their prey into a glove: here, Þórr does this of his own free will, and far from the "bag" closing him in, he is free to leave at any time through the massively wide sleeve end of the glove, which is specially commented on. *c*) The role reversal of the giant having the magic knot, rather than the hero (as does Conan in the Irish analogue), and of Þórr being unable to get into the bag rather than out of it, is again a reflection of the satiric nature of Snorri's myth, where the divine hero is the butt of the fun.

The Ossetic analogue to Þ2/3 is less close than the Irish, not just in narrative terms, but also in its purpose, which appears to be to explore the nature of a long-gone race of beings. This motif is not entirely absent from Germanic tradition, for it is implied in the poetic phrase *eald enta geweorc* ['ancient accomplishments of giants'], used in Old English for example for the then ruinous state of Roman buildings (as in *The Ruin*). Yet it is not apparent as a significant theme in the myth that Snorri recounts. I have already noted that Snorri's myth implies the existence of an earlier version of Þórr's visit to the giant realm, in which the satire directed at the god would be absent. It is possible that the Ossetic tale, in a much earlier form, has influenced or even originated such a narrative: the problem is that we cannot determine either what form this postulated earlier Norse form of Þ2/3 may have taken, or what the Ossetic tale may have been like a thousand years ago. Assuming minimal difference from the extant versions, however, it is conceivable that an original Norse mytheme of Þórr contending with

a giant, such as we find in *Þórsdrápa* with Geirrøðr, has been expanded and adapted under the influence of an antecedent of the Ossetic tale into one in which a divine group takes shelter in an outlandish "house", formed of the attire or body-part of a giant (and realised, in Germanic tradition, specifically as a glove), and then awaken the giant it belongs to – whether from sleep or death is perhaps not so vital a distinction, since in Norse tradition giants show certain deathly traits anyway – in order to engage in sporting contests, which reveal the nature of the parties concerned, after which the giant is finally defeated (in Norse tradition, violently). Snorri's version subverts many elements: the fearsome, and possibly originally deathly, terror of the giant is revealed to consist of his loud snoring, for example, and what may originally have been attempts to waken the giant, a motif occurring also in the tales of the Northern Russian Svjatogor, turn into futile attempts by Þórr to kill him, which scarcely even succeed in fully wakening him.

The existence of such an Ossetic-flavoured antecedent of Snorri's myth is of course speculative. Its existence might, however, have eased the adoption of elements of the Irish tales, and hence have given an initial impetus for developing the narrative towards a new perspective, which reaches its culmination in the form preserved by Snorri. Whether it was Snorri or an earlier creative artist, the composer of the extant version, in deciding to adopt a satirical focus for the tale, has been able to achieve his end through the use of the Irish versions, in particular in the realisation of the objects of the contests as abstract qualities which a hero cannot defeat (Power 1985: 259–260).

Analysis of the Mythological Motifs of Þ1

One main reason for Þ1's existence in Norse tradition is probably that it fits in with other tales which seek to explain the gods' falling short of absolute power, expressed through defects relating directly to each god's special realm of activity: Óðinn has given up an eye, Heimdallr's hearing is buried beneath the world tree, and Freyr has lost his sword. Þórr's province was protection of mankind. This is expressed in his giant-crushing hammer, Mjǫlnir, which was short in the shaft (*Skáldskaparmál* ch. 35)[47] – a sort of physical "lameness" comparable with that of the goat. The hammer, however, unlike the other gods' attributes just mentioned, is not, so to speak, "immolated" by its owner – but the goat is, being offered to the peasant family, a further reflection of Þórr's role as protector (and sustainer) of mankind. Þ1 differs from the Caucasian parallels in its lack of the Pelops motif: no wooden or other prosthesis replaces the missing bone – the animal is simply lame. This is a reflection of the emphasis on *insufficiency* in this and the other myths just noted.

To proffer suggestions about Þ1's development involves dealing with its strange narrative structure, whereby it presents us with the *guest* providing the meal, and then becoming angry at the behaviour of a member of the *host's* family – a combination not found in any analogues from elsewhere.

It suggests a narrative development which has left certain incongruities in its train. If the motif of a faulty animal resurrection has come from outside Norse tradition or been so influenced, what may have existed in earlier tradition that has been altered by the arrival of the motif? The tale as recorded by Snorri can be broken down into a number of components (motifs or motif-complexes):[48]

1. Þórr takes as his servants the children of a family whom he threatens. *Hymiskviða* differs from Snorri here, indicating, it would seem, that this takes place *after* the adventure in the realm of the giants, and is connected in some way with the giants' uprising that Þórr has to defeat. This is in line with Indian tradition, which needs to be taken into account in establishing the most fundamental levels of the myth, since Þórr has, in part, developed from an inherited Indo-European tradition, found also in the Indian Vedic and successive texts. Many of the core characteristics of Indra correspond to those of Þórr in Norse myth.[49] Now Indra too has his servants, the Maruts. According to the *Ramayana*, after the god had slain her multiple evil sons (to be compared with the giants Þórr defeats at the end of his expedition to giantland), Diti kept herself pregnant for an immense length of time by magic to produce a son that would outdo Indra: hearing this, the god blasted the fetus to pieces, each of which formed into a separate being, serving him as storm gods, the Maruts, at Diti's request (O'Flaherty 1975: 90–94). The threatened blow against Þjalfi's family by Þórr is notable in Snorri's account: in Indian, the blow actually takes place, but the result in both cases is that the thunder god gains new servants from among his enemies. The degree to which Þjalfi's kin are conceived as giants is open to debate; Snorri does not present them as such, but *Hymiskviða* does. They may have been giants only in a loose sense: they are comparable for example with the children, Sun and Moon, of the primordial being Mundilfœri (*Vafþrúðnismál* 23), particularly if, like the Maruts, they were conceived originally as aspects of the storm.[50]
2. Behind the stay at the farmer's house may lie a motif of wandering gods bestowing divine gifts on mankind. This occurs with the group who bestow the essentials of life on Askr and Embla in *Vǫluspá*, or Rígr in *Rígsþula*, who bestows *ráð*, meaning both "marriage" and "good advice", on a series of couples. It would appear to be the gift of food that Þórr bestows: but this is scarcely Þórr's normal role. He is above all *alda véurr* ['defender of mankind'] and hence his gift would be expected to be protection, which indeed he offers to the family, at the cost of their yielding up their children to serve him; the nourishment may be seen as an aspect of this overall protection. It is here that Þórr comes closest to the Master of the Animals: one interesting feature of the Caucasian hunting-myths, as analysed by Tuite (1997: 16–17), is how the gods, the guardians of the wild and herders of game, must first consume and resurrect prey animals before human hunters can catch them – which they can only do once the animals have been weakened, their essential strength diminished, through the loss of a bone (and its replacement

with a prosthesis). Hence the Þjalfi motif may mark out an aetiological tale of how humans managed to secure their source of prey, through a misdemeanour that at the same time enabled the gods to proffer this prey to them.[51]

3. We also encounter the motif of humans offending a divinity that visits them, which results in a curse, but also a blessing. This occurs for example in *Grímnismál*, where Óðinn visits King Geirrøðr, and kills him for his lack of hospitality, but also blesses his son Agnarr for kingship. In Þ1, the curse is commuted into service by the children, which in itself is a blessing, as they enjoy the protection of the deity.
4. The meal that goes wrong is a motif also found in *Haustlǫng*: here too a group of gods is going to giantland, and their meal is upset by the intervention of a giant, Loki's reaction to which causes misfortune.[52]
5. The goat's lameness does not affect the action in Snorri's version of the myth, but *Hymiskviða* indicates it occurs at a vital point in the gods' withdrawal from the giants, when Loki's misplaced actions will have their greatest effect. Loki, though present, has no role in Þ1, but *Hymiskviða* blames him for the goats' lameness (without saying that he was actually present in the narrative); it is probable that he did not cause this directly, but in some way lay behind it (e.g. by suggesting they leave the goats with a giant, Egill).

This analysis of the motifs occurring in Snorri's version and elsewhere suggests that at an earlier stage of narrative development, both the taking of Þjalfi and Rǫskva into service and the laming of the goat took place towards the end of the narrative, after a battle with the giants. Although the connection between Þ1 and Þ2/3 is weak, it seems likely that Þ1's two main motifs (the children's service and the lameness) were traditionally associated with some visit or other of Þórr to the giant realm, though its position in the narrative sequence has had to shift in Snorri's version, where there is no concluding battle with the giants.

In view of these conclusions, it is pertinent to bring in some analogues from Celtic myth – though space precludes affording them here the detailed investigation they call for. Brân, in *Branwen ferch Lŷr* in the Welsh *Mabinogion*, presents a magic cauldron as part of his sister Branwen's dowry when she marries the Irish king Matholwch; subsequently a war breaks out, in which the Irish initially triumph as they throw their dead into the cauldron to revive them – though these warriors have the defect of not being able to speak thereafter. As Dáithi Ó hÓgáin (1999: 62) shows, Brân corresponds to the Irish god Daghdha, who in one 9th-century description is said to have a mighty club which kills immediately with one end, and revives with the other; he also has a cauldron capable of feeding a whole assembly. The cauldron of sustenance and rebirth is paralleled in the cauldron Þórr retrieves from Hymir, which is used at a feast of the gods, and Daghdha's club matches Þórr's hammer. One further significant detail in the Welsh tale is Brân's lameness:[53] he calls out before the battle to beware Pierced Thighs – apparently a reference to himself, for he is then wounded in the leg with a spear, an act of emasculation (as is clear from later versions of the tale, in the

form of the Fisher King), and he subsequently perishes, only his prophetic head remaining, which has to be removed to the distant city of London. It seems likely that a coincidence of a guardian god, armed with a cudgel, a cauldron of plenty, a visit to some sort of otherworld, and lameness may lie behind both Norse and Irish/Welsh traditions. Yet, if such an ancient (perhaps Indo-European) motif-complex did exist, it has been drastically recast in the Norse version through the imposition of the lameness not on the god but on his draft animal, which – even if we allow that from a structuralist perspective the god and his animal may be equivalents – again suggests a recasting of tradition, most probably as a result of outside influences.

This borrowing – if such indeed took place – of a mythologem of a divine being resurrecting a consumed animal allowed the Norse motifs to come together. The difference between the non-divine and the divine participants is emphasised, and the transgression of a non-god takes the form of a breach of hospitality, and brings in the motif of the meal of the gods on the way to giantland at the same time. By ascribing the story to Þórr, it was also possible to identify the transgressor as his servant Þjalfi, forming an aetiological myth of how he and Rǫskva became the god's servants in the first place (a refinement of what I would take to be the earlier tradition of *Hymiskviða*, where they appear to have been more general prisoners taken after a battle against the giants). The bringing together of the motifs is neat, but leaves some oddities. In particular, we have the strange situation of a guest providing the fare, and the host breaching the hospitality rules; also, the very choice of fare is anomalous: goat is neither a primary form of farm animal (as in the Irish analogues), nor wild prey. As goats were the animals which in the tradition were associated with Þórr (perhaps because they were beasts of the rocks, the abode of Þórr's enemies the giants), the choice in one sense was inevitable, yet the tale in the form we have it looks like a not wholly successful adaptation of an older tradition to a new, borrowed mythologem, whereby the essential point that the motif relates to the main source of sustenance is overshadowed. Yet matters may not be quite so simple, for some interesting parallels may be drawn again with the Caucasian materials. Here, the goat was an animal of the sacred uplands, overseen by the protective deities, and hence its use for food (as opposed to domesticated cattle, for example) marked a liminal passage from the human to the divine: thus Þórr's provision not merely of nourishment, but of heavenly protection, is emphasised. The fact that Þórr's goats are draft animals in itself indicates their intermediary qualities, animals of the wild put to a form of domesticated service.[54]

Why should the motif have become associated specifically with Þórr? He is not the most obvious candidate in the Norse pantheon to take on a role assumed in many of the Alpine and insular analogues either by fairy-type spirits or women (assuming we wish to look to the western analogues as the source of inspiration). To a certain extent, however, Þórr corresponds to the Master/Mistress of Animals, particularly in the latter's *rulership*, which matches the mastery Þórr exerts, in particular as protector and sustainer of humans: this could be described as a development in a different society of

the Master's role, though neither Þórr nor any other Norse divinity can be said to correspond in more than a general manner to the Master/Mistress of Animals.[55] There may, in the realm of culinary provision, have been a perceived need by way of balance to ascribe to Þórr what is elsewhere ascribed to Óðinn, in whose hall the boar Sæhrímnir is cooked and revived each day (*Gylfaginning* ch. 38),[56] particularly as Þórr is typically seen as operating outside Ásgarðr, whereas Óðinn has his hall Valhǫll within: just as Óðinn and his companions can enjoy the ever-renewing meat of the boar in his hall, so too Þórr can revive his goats out in the wilderness in the same way.[57] But it may also be precisely because Þórr's journeys to giantland were conceived as *austrfarar* ['journeys to the east'], that a motif of known southern origin would be felt appropriate for him; the implication then is that the resurrection motif was perceived as deriving rather more from this direction than from Ireland. The centrality of the goat in the Caucasian resurrection tales would obviously ease the adoption of the motif within a tale concerning Þórr, whose goats we may assume to have been part of long-standing tradition. Finally, there is Þórr's weapon, his hammer: as a doler out, like Daghdha's club, of death and life,[58] it functioned as a wand, necessary in magical rituals such as resurrection.[59] Among gods' attributes, it is eminently suitable to the task at hand here, particularly as Þórr's role was to protect and sustain mankind.

Conclusions

Tracking of motifs is bound, I think, to be a speculative affair. Yet I hope I have shown how a little investigation of the historical movements of peoples at least opens up possibilities and shifts the balance between various scenarios. A realisation of the complexities involved in such an investigation helps to avoid drawing facile inferences, even if the conclusions remain tendentious. It is also clear that the passage of narrative motifs – and no doubt mythic and religious themes – among peoples is an involved affair, and may occur several times over via different channels.

The myth under consideration has analogues both in Western Europe and on the steppe (and even some in Northern Russia). Understanding the possible development of a myth involves weighing up the depth or superficiality of a motif within a society: the motif of the resurrected animal (the source of food) is deeply rooted in northern hunting societies, whereas the resurrection of Þórr's goats, affected by damaging a bone, forms a motif that within the Norse field is more a curiosity than something of obvious religious significance (though the general element of defectiveness is paralleled elsewhere in Norse). It is possible that the motif has survived, isolated from its wider religious context, from archaic times; yet we have little indication of this in the extant sources. More likely appears to be the scenario that it is a late borrowing of a motif which has not been fully absorbed into the religious outlook of the society.

I have argued that it is feasible to trace many of the motifs of the myth ultimately back to the steppe, but by the Viking age these motifs

were certainly widespread in certain areas of Europe. The Vikings had considerable contact both with Western Europe, including Ireland in particular, and with the steppe. However, we have a far better recorded and known corpus of folktale material from Ireland than we do from the steppe, so the greater similarity of the Irish analogues to the Norse may in part be an artefact of this disparity in the source material. I would not argue against Irish influence, but it is possible to incorporate influences from the steppe as well, if we allow that the development of the narrative is likely to have been more complex than simply lifting a tale from one culture and depositing it in another. The Caucasus region, particularly as the cradle of the Alans, is likely, it has been argued, to have been the ultimate source of motifs found across Europe in areas of Norse interaction, through a series of borrowings at various times and places.

My overall aim has been to broaden the frame of reference in investigations of the religious and folk traditions of Scandinavia/European Russia. I have outlined how the trail of Þórr's goats appears most obviously to lead the short distance to the Sámi, but, in the absence of close parallels among the Sámi, I have suggested this inference may be incorrect, even though the Sámi did share the essential hunting paradigm of reciprocity. This should act as a warning against automatically inferring that any foreign, "eastern", elements within Norse religion or myth need come from the Norsemen's Finno-Ugric-speaking neighbours. The arena needs to be broadened, and its complexity perceived. The peoples of the steppe, the ultimate source (I argue) for certain motifs occurring in Norse tales, were confederacies (including, probably, Finno-Ugric speakers among many others).[60] The existence of the hordes indeed raises some important points: these amalgams of peoples should remind us that, ultimately, we cannot speak of a motif or tale being "Norse" or "Finno-Ugric", but only as being recorded within particular areas or traditions, themselves subject to turmoil, and as being more or less coherent with other elements of the tradition in which it occurs, and with elements found elsewhere. It is important, when considering belief-systems or folktale motifs, that we observe these principles, rather than, for example, defining a tradition on essentially external principles such as language.[61] I hope that the present essay, in covering many different cultures and language groups which nonetheless are arguably linked through folktale motifs, will reinforce efforts to see Germanic, Finno-Ugric and other traditions in the context of the greater cultural movements and adherences that swept these areas of the globe for so many centuries.

NOTES

1 I have discussed how 12th-century Norwegians were familiar with the details of at least one shamanic performance among the Sámi, and I have also argued for the influence of Sámi bear rites on *Hrólfs saga kraka* (Tolley 2009 I: 258–268, and ch. 20). The whole topic of interaction between Norse and Finnish narrative traditions is considered by Frog (2010).

2 On Snorri as author of *Egils saga*, see Torfi Tulinius (2002: 234–237).

3 We may note, by way of comparison, how, following the myth under discussion, Snorri casually adds a link to the tale of Þórr's fishing of the world serpent; whether Snorri is himself responsible for adding Þ1 to Þ2/3 cannot be ascertained, but he at least shows a propensity for forming such narrative links.

4 The myth has a series of threesomes: the three sections (Þ1, Þ2 and Þ3), the three nights in giant land (two with Skrýmir, one with Útgarða-Loki), the three strikes against Skrýmir, the three godly contenders against the giants, the last of whom, Þórr, undertakes three exploits in the castle, of which the first, the drinking, involves three swigs. Such structures are typical of oral story-telling, though their presence does not guarantee an oral origin to the overall myth in the form we have it – they can equally well reflect Snorri's own ordered narrative techniques; Snorri certainly exhibits similar threefold patterns elsewhere, e.g. in the Baldr cycle (see Frog 2010, §19.3). The tripartitism might be viewed as a reflection of a (Dumézilian) Indo-European trifunctionalism (see for example Dumézil 2007–2008 on trifunctionalism in Norse and other folktales), but the tale, in my view, is unlikely to prove amenable to such an analysis. Three-fold divisions are a commonplace.

5 Snorri makes some effort to include Rǫskva when the companions continue on their journey, explicitly saying she was among them, and (sporadically) using the neuter plural pronoun *þau* (to indicate the inclusion of a woman) – though the masculine form predominates, and the neuter form has disappeared by the time we arrive at Útgarða-Loki's castle, suggesting the attempt to include Rǫskva was at best half-hearted, as is reflected in her complete inaction.

6 For a review of the topic of the Master of the Animals, with extensive bibliography, see Paulson & Auer (1964), and Paulson's (1961) study of Eurasian Masters.

7 Also noteworthy is the Sámi's careful placement in anatomical order of the bones of the sacred animal, the bear, in special graves as a reflection of this ideology (Zachrisson 1973, Pentikäinen 2007: 47, 77–80). We might also compare the way the shaman's skeleton is reassembled at his initiation in the otherworld, but with the addition of extra parts (as in the Nganasan initiation of Serepte Dyaruoskin, given by Popov 1968), the state of his skeleton therefore determining his nature.

8 See MacKillop 1998: s.vv. "Cernunnos", "Epona", "Rhiannon"; Ross 1992 [1967]: ch. 3, 5.

9 More generally, Ginzburg (1992: pt 3, ch. 1) considers Eurasian connections of western European traditions, and specifically considers the myth under consideration here, with reference to Sámi and Alpine connections, on pp. 134, 246.

10 I am grateful to Frog for pointing out to me that an echo of the resuscitation motif may survive in Scandinavian folklore, where witches were said to regenerate the flesh on skeletons of herring (see Kvideland & Sehmsdorf 1988: 171–172). However, there are distinct differences, which to my mind suggest we are dealing here with an essentially distinct motif: the herring is associated with the notion of the witch's familiar, so that injury to the fish bones results in injury to the witch, not to the resuscitated fish (a motif familiar also from traditions of Sámi shamans, one of whose helping spirits was a fish), and the fish flesh is in fact a deception, resulting in eventual starvation if consumed. Nonetheless, the herring motif may illustrate the result of a recasting of the resuscitation motif – whether this is derived from the Sámi or from further afield – within the conceptual framework of a world in which witches play a significant role.

11 Power (1985: 247, 251) compares Meanma, whose name signifies "Energy" and the like, to Rǫskva, whose meaning is roughly "Brisk". She considers that Rǫskva's place in the Útgarðar contests may have been usurped by Þjalfi: "it is unlikely that Snorri would have included Rǫskva in the tale unless she was traditionally

connected with it" (Power 1985: 252–253). Yet, as indicated in n. 5, Rǫskva has actually disappeared from the tale before this point, and belongs really only to Þ1, her evanescent presence thereafter being a weak attempt to link Þ1 to Þ2/3, and is probably Snorri's doing, not traditional, as the goat episode does not appear to have been associated with the Þ2/3 myth elsewhere, judging by its different use in *Hymiskviða*. Moreover, the word for "thought", *hugr*, upon which the personification Hugi is based, is masculine in Old Norse, and this would preclude personifying this being and its contender as females.

12 Hesiod, *Theogony* 687–693, recounts Zeus's use of the *keraunos* in his attack on the Titans.

13 See Alexander (2008: ch. 4 and esp. ch. 5); he argues that the Irish motif goes back well beyond the 12th or 13th centuries. Irish occurrences are listed in Plummer (1910 I: cxliii); here, the motif of a saint restoring a consumed animal to life is common, but far more rarely do we encounter the notion of preserving the bones intact in order to achieve this; the two examples from among the lives published in Plummer's own collection are Ciaran of Cluain ch. 5, where the saint tells a pitiably hungry wolf to eat a calf, to which is added in Gaelic "and do not break or eat its bones" (Ciaran then restores the calf to life afterwards); and Mochua ch. 5, which gives a long description of a herd of deer, which were treated like cattle, being resuscitated the day after being consumed, the special need to keep their bones intact being mentioned.

14 Cf. Schmidt (1952: 528), who notes that the animals concerned in the Irish tales are almost always domestic.

15 For a detailed investigation of medieval saints' relationships to and use of animals see Alexander (2008).

16 Note that "British" is used in reference to the Celtic-speaking community of Britain, as opposed to the Germanic-speaking "English" community.

17 For detailed discussion of the composition and recording of Irish saints' lives, see Sharpe (1991); he does not discuss Nennius.

18 I leave out of consideration here any possible underlying pagan tradition behind the Werburgh story, other than to note that there are grounds to warrant such an investigation. In particular, the parallels with Rhiannon are striking: a wronged female of royal (or, in Rhiannon's case, originally divine) family, associated with rebirth, who has special birds as companions; Rhiannon's birds do not themselves die and come back to life, but they sing from the otherworld, and are able to revive the dead (see Ross 1992 [1967]: 338–339). On a tile from Roussas, France, there is even a depiction of Epona riding a harnessed goose (reproduced in Ross 1992 [1967]: 287).

19 The extensive Norse settlement around Staraja Ladoga could easily have operated as a theatre of folktale interchange, including with the indigenous Finnic population, a point echoed also for example by Ahola (2004), who notes that Novgorodian *bylina*s present the hero more in line with Finnish traditions, for example of Kaukomieli, as solitary, badly behaved and rebellious against his own people.

20 I cite West as perhaps the most recent advocate of this Ossetic parallel; in fact, the same tale had been noted already by Olrik (1922: 221) in his study of the Norse myth of *ragnarǫk*. Lindow (2000: 171), noting the research history of the Ossetic parallel, calls it "unconvincing". The tale itself is also told in the collection of Ossetic tales by Sikojev (1985: 282–284, "Der Schädel des Uaigs"); it is clear that the notion of resurrection from the bones of a dead being, here a giant, forms a central theme here, as it does in the Norse Þ1.

21 More recently, Tuite (1997) has traced the similarities of the Pelops motif (in which the "prey" is resurrected with a prosthesis), occurring in a number of European (especially Balkan) myths, to the Caucasian hunting reciprocity myths under discussion here.

22 See further Dirr (1925) on the Caucasian Master of Animals.
23 Tuite notes that the prosthesis motif is, in tales from west of the Bosporus, associated with human prey.
24 The palaeolithic hypothesis as an explanation of many folklore features widespread throughout Europe is particularly adopted by Mario Alinei (founder of the journal *Quaderni di semantica*, which focuses on such issues) and his followers.
25 It is actually probably wrong to consider any of the incursions into Europe as being the undertaking of single tribes; whilst the Western historians used general terms like "Huns", within these groups were various tribes of different ethnicities and languages, who themselves may earlier have been overcome and then joined the horde as allies or subjects of its leading aristocracy. This was acknowledged even in Antiquity: note for example how Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* xxxi.2.13, records that the Alans were composed of many peoples who had been overrun and absorbed over time. The problem is of course well recognised amongst modern historians of the period; see, for example, the discussion in Pohl (2002 [1988]: 21–27). For the sake of simplicity in the present argument, these problems are skated over, since the essential point remains that peoples emerged, in something like a constant stream, from steppe regions, whence they brought cultural characteristics typical of these regions, which in principle were open to being passed on to those with whom these steppe peoples merged in Europe.
26 For a good recent and non-technical account of these prehistoric incursions and the origins of Indo-European language spread, see Anthony (2007).
27 The history of the interactions of the nomadic steppe peoples with Germanic cultures and with the Roman Empire is very complex, and it would be of little relevance to rehearse it here; for lengthy historical discussions, see Maenchen-Helfen (1973) on the Huns, Wolfram (1988 [1979]) and Heather (1996) on the Goths, Burns (1991 [1984]) on the Ostrogoths, Bachrach (1973) on the Alans, Alemany (2000) for sources on the Alans, Pohl (2002 [1988]) on the Avars, László (1970) on Migration Age art and associated myths, Curta (2006) on barbarian incursions into medieval south-eastern Europe.
28 Notable here is the death of the Gothic king Ermanaric in 376, which led to the Ostrogoths being so subjugated; Ermanaric (in the Norse form Jǫrmunrekkr) is a central character of the heroic poems of the Icelandic *Poetic Edda*.
29 The Huns were not the last of the invaders from the steppe: they were followed a century or so later by the Avars; they too were probably predominantly Turkic-speaking (though corroborative evidence for this is almost non-existent: Pohl 2002 [1988]: 223–225). By the mid-6th century they had overrun the Ukraine, and proceeded towards the Danube. Their goal was the Carpathian basin, from which in 568 they ousted the Lombards (a Germanic people who subsequently occupied northern Italy), and absorbed the East Germanic Gepids living in what is now eastern Hungary. Their advance into western Europe was halted by the strong presence of the Germanic Franks, but their overlordship of the Carpathian area lasted several centuries.
30 The mode of passage from oral tradition to written works is both complex and much debated, but the works in question were committed to writing probably around 1200 or soon after, though neither German nor Icelandic manuscripts survive from this early; thus, for example, Lindblad (1954: 241, 325) dates the Codex Regius manuscript of eddic poems to ca. 1270 (arguing also that it was based on earlier antecedents from before ca. 1240); however, the margin of uncertainty of date is a matter of a few decades either way.
31 Whilst the interactions between the Huns' successors the Avars and Germanic peoples must surely have produced much heroic verse, such poems have left no obvious trace among the extant works recorded in later centuries.
32 Such motifs, recorded in Norse sources but perhaps reflecting a more widespread

tradition in earlier Germanic societies, may sometimes be linked in a more specific manner to the steppe – yet not necessarily in a straightforward manner. Horse sacrifice, whose occurrence is evidenced in Scandinavia both archaeologically and in narratives, is an example. Görman (1993) sees an influence from similar Hunnish practices, which themselves clearly reflect practices found across the steppe region, whence they undoubtedly derive; these could well have been adopted by a warrior elite at the time of strong Hunnish–Germanic contacts. Yet horse sacrifice is deeply ingrained in several Indo-European traditions (the Indian *aśvamedha* being a specially elaborately developed example), and it is difficult to believe that its occurrence in pagan Scandinavia does not derive from its being inherited as a long-standing Indo-European practice. It is possible that existing traditions were reinforced by Hunnish and other foreign practices and beliefs, but what the exact nature of this "reinforcement" may have been is a complex and probably unsolvable problem. On the topic of Germanic–Finnish narrative interaction, see Frog's paper in the present collection.

33 Note, for instance, the particularly rich animal motifs in the art of the steppe peoples: for examples and discussion, see Phillips (1965), László (1970).

34 Contacts between England and Ireland, and between both these and the continent, were extensive and well documented in the pre-Viking period (i.e. before Nennius); see for example Levison (1946).

35 To be more precise, the specific motif of a resurrected animal (a bird) involving a perception of lack of *integritas* may have derived from the continent, but this could have been applied to an existing divine female being associated more generally with rebirth and with birds, as realised in the person of Rhiannon.

36 It is difficult to see why Britain should preserve the motif with a religious meaning comparable to that found in hunting societies. However, there are other ways of approaching the motif: without seeking to prejudice a more thorough investigation of this issue, the widespread folk belief is worth noting that the otherworld (the world of the dead) is the antithesis of this, so that whole items here are broken there, and vice versa, resulting in practices of breaking grave goods to preserve their integrity in the otherworld, which might also be applied to an animal sent into the otherworld. Related to this may be the emphasis on the otherworldliness of the consumers of the animal's flesh, such as is found in the Alpine (and one Devonshire) examples, and which may lie behind the saint, a spiritual being, as protagonist in some insular hagiographical instances; there is a particularly strong strand of tales concerning otherworldly beings in British/Irish folklore (see for example Briggs 1976 *passim*, and further references there). Part of the point of the mythologem would then be – as is clearly the case in some Alpine examples – to emphasise the difference between spirits and humans in their interactions with the world, metonymised in the slain animal.

37 The manuscript readings are not clear at this point; the leader involved may not have been the same Goar as is discussed above, but his identity as an Alan is not doubted.

38 Bertolotti (1991: 56) notes another interesting fact about the tradition of St Germanus, though it is recorded much later, in the 13th century: Vincent of Beauvais, writing on Germanus in *Speculum historiale* XX.4, recounts that the young man had a pear tree, from whose branches "he would hang the heads of wild animals he had caught, in order to inspire admiration for such a great hunt"; he was forced to desist from this by the church authorities, but initially reacted angrily. Hanging the heads of prey on trees is characteristic of hunting societies: it is found, for example, preserved in Finnish tradition in bear rites, where the bear's head was suspended in a tree after its "wedding" feast, apparently as part of its ritual return to its home in heaven (thence to be reborn, according to the principles of hunting reciprocity): see Pentikäinen (2007: 80).

39 Indeed, it may not even have needed to travel far: from the 2nd century AD, the Goths occupied territories in what is now the Ukraine as far east as the Don, bordering directly on Alan lands, and there was a continuum of Germanic-speaking regions between here and Scandinavia, through which the tale could have travelled once it was borrowed by the Goths; the fact that the Eruli, not far from the Goths, still sent back to Thule, their Scandinavian homeland, for a new king (Procopius, *History of the Wars* VI.xiv.42, VI.xv.27–30) illustrates the long-standing and intimate connections which were maintained across this region (the first choice of the ambassadors dispatched to Thule in fact died on the way back south, among the Danes, indicating that the Eruli lived beyond the Danes, as seen from Byzantium).

40 On the history of the Rus see Franklin & Shepard (1996: ch. 1–4).

41 Þórr may himself have been envisaged as guardian of the world pillar, and hence had the power to undermine the pillar of the giant world: see Tolley (2009 I: 279–282) on Þórr as cosmic pillar. In the mythologem outlined by McKinnell, the sea/river is also significant, but is mentioned only in passing in Snorri's myth, and its dangers are reduced to its merely being "deep". Þórr's association with dangerous waters is a fundamental and ancient part of his mythological make-up, being paralleled in Indra's contest with the waters in Indian tradition (see Tolley 2009 I: 285–288).

42 In fact, we may observe a coincidence of two dualities in the tale, which together form a threesome, in addition to the threesomes in the tale noted previously: as well as the (in Snorri) implicit connection through identity of name between Loki and Útgarða-Loki, the latter explicitly identifies himself with Skrýmir.

43 In Saxo, it is clear that Útgarða-Loki is indeed Loki, bound as he is in a snake-infested cave in the giant realms, like Loki after his part in the slaying of Baldr (a myth recounted by Snorri in *Gylfaginning* ch. 50).

44 On the persona of Loki in Norse myth, see for example McKinnell (1994: ch. 2).

45 Frog (2010: §19.3, especially pp. 243–250) shows how similar processes are at work elsewhere in Snorri: Snorri conflated various traditions for his account of the weeping and oath-taking in his Baldr Cycle, resulting in genre transgressions, where for example Hel's demand that all things, "kykvir ok dauðir" ['living and dead'] should weep for Baldr to secure his release (*Gylfaginning* ch. 49) is very probably derived directly from the Apostles' Creed.

46 The *glof* could perhaps have been a pouch, however. In any case, it resembles both Skrýmir's glove and his bag, for Grendel's *glof* is described as sealed with magical bonds, and as something he intended to poke Beowulf into, as one of many victims.

47 Cf. Lindow (2000: 173–174); also Lindow (1994: 486), who discusses Þórr's hammer more broadly.

48 It is worth adding to the list a further possible explanation of the strange situation in which the guest provides the food – though I would discount it as of any value, since there is no hint of it in Snorri's myth. During the visit of Thorkillus to the giant Guthmundus in Saxo (*Gesta Danorum* VIII), Thorkillus warns his companions not to eat any meal offered them, but to rely only on what they brought with them, exemplifying a widespread folktale motif of the perilous food of the otherworld. If the motif of the perilous otherworld food was a feature of the myth in an earlier version, Snorri has had to eschew it, as he is intent on presenting all the hosts Þórr encounters as genial, not as monsters whose deathly fare might be feared.

49 I briefly consider some of the links between Þórr and Indra in Tolley (2009 I: 287–288).

50 The divine adoption of two children as servants is a widespread story pattern; it is implicit in the tale of Mundilfœri's children, and explicit in the adoption of

Bil and Hjúki as followers of Máni, the Moon (*Gylfaginning* ch. 11). If ever it was present in Indra's case, the Indian tradition has multiplied the children into the countless Maruts. Rǫskva's name, "Brisk", is readily interpreted as relating to the storm; Þjalfi is etymologically difficult to fathom. Yet *a*) his speed (comparable to that implied in his sister's name) in the race against Hugi is surely an ancient feature made use of in an unusual context, and *b*) there may be some connection, both lexical and mythical, with Þieluar, the founder of Gotland in *Guta saga*. Þieluar made the island firm by consecrating it with fire (a typical act of settlement, found in later Icelandic sagas as an act undertaken by new settlers in Iceland to lay claim to their land), and acted as establisher of a dynasty. Þórr, god of thunder and hence lightning (fire), is himself closely associated with settlement: another act of Icelandic settlers was to cast overboard the high-seat pillars from their homeland, and establish their new home where these came to land; these pillars were dedicated to Þórr (who may himself have been conceived as a world pillar, maintaining order in the whole cosmos). Þjalfi (or Þieluar) would thus be acting in his capacity as Þórr's servant in fixing a settlement with fire, and establishing order and a dynasty there. I consider this theme, though without bringing in Þjalfi, in Tolley (2009 I: 279–282), where discussion of the source material will be found.

51 Tuite (1997: 15) notes that the Caucasian divine patrons of game animals often took on the form of the animals they guarded (deer and ibex). If we adopt a structuralist approach, we may suggest that Þórr is structurally equivalent to the goat which is offered (and which is "offended" by being lamed, as the god is offended by the laming of his animal): hence this protector of mankind is, through the symbolism of his goat, offering himself for the salvation of mankind.

52 This myth is recounted by Snorri in *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 2, based on *Haustlǫng*: the gods Óðinn, Hœnir and Loki are out in the wilderness, and their meal will not cook because of a giant, Þjazi, in eagle form sitting above them preventing it doing so until they give him a portion; when the eagle seizes the whole roast, Loki is so incensed that he swipes at the eagle, and is swept away to giant land, whence he has to secure his release by promising the goddess Iðunn to the giants. This narrative, distinct from the laming of the goat myth, illustrates, on a general level, how the sharing of a meal represents harmony, which it is Loki's function to disrupt.

53 Lameness of course occurs widely as a mythological motif. Ginzburg (1992: 227–231) suggests a link between a lame hero and a visit to the otherworld; his discussion, however, lacks precision and depth. Þórr's visit to Útgarða-Loki might be interpreted as an otherworld journey, marked at the outset by lameness, but with the lameness here transferred from the hero to his draft animal, and, at least in Snorri's version, any deathly aspect to Útgarðar is downplayed.

54 The same point might be made with regard to St Werburgh's geese, a type of fowl which is half-wild (unlike chickens), and hence occupies a transitional state between the human and non-human worlds: geese, as fowl whose welfare fell to women, are the female world's equivalent of prey.

55 *Pace* Bertolotti (1991: 53–54), who adduces some rather vague features and analogues to this effect.

56 Some care is needed here, however: the assertion that the boar is cooked and revived each day is Snorri's interpretation of *Grímnismál* 18 (with Snorri perhaps being mindful of the story of Þórr's goats, i.e. it may not be an independent witness to the resurrected animal motif); in the poem, the concern appears to be to stress the availability of food in the hall, not the mechanics of how it is renewed; similarly, st. 25 presents the goat Heiðrún, who, instead of milk, produces mead for the warrior hordes (and may have acted as inspiration to see in Þórr's (male) goats a source of nourishment). Hence I would not make any close connection between the animals of Valhǫll and Þórr's goats, other than to see them as parallel sources of (unending) nourishment; the resurrection motif, linked to the integrity of the

bones, is unique to Þórr's goats, and surely stems ultimately from a hunting society, but in Norse has become devoid of its wider eco-religious context.

57 Lindow (2000) emphasises how Snorri's myth of Þórr's visit to Útgarða-Loki highlights the relationships of Þórr and Óðinn with humans, with Þórr emerging as the one devoted to helping humans (even if he lacks Óðinn's mastery of language); on this reading, Útgarða-Loki acts as a realisation of Óðinn, rather than Loki.

58 The hammer appears, for example, to have been used to bless weddings, and to have had phallic connotations (see Perkins 1994, focusing on the interpretation of *Þrymskviða* 30–31).

59 I am thankful to Davide Ermacora for emphasising the importance of the weapon or other attribute functioning as a wand in most variants of the animal resurrection motif.

60 The most obvious example is the Hungarians, the one group that, as a confederacy, maintained its Finno-Ugric language, yet which certainly included Turkic-speakers and others. I have not considered possible connections between Hungarian and Norse tradition – something which would not, perhaps, naturally occur to researchers to investigate, until it is remembered that the steppes of the Ukraine were populated by Hungarians at the time of the early Rus explorations down to the Black Sea, until the Turkic-speaking Pechenegs ousted them and helped set them on their journey to the Carpathian basin.

61 Germanic studies have in the past been dogged by such assumptions as that the pagan English worshipped the same gods as the Norsemen, but the Finno-Ugric situation is potentially more problematic still: Finno-Ugric (and, more widely, Uralic) peoples lived markedly different lives over the vast tracts they occupied; I suggest the linguistic links between them should not incline us to see more coherence among them than was really the case. The theme of hunting reciprocity, for example, largely alien to all ancient Germanic traditions as recorded, certainly occurs among Finno-Ugric peoples such as the Sámi and Khanty, but it occurs strongly elsewhere too, and conversely is absent from many Finno-Ugric peoples; attempting to define such motifs as belonging to any particular linguistic group is folly, and I would argue that the onus is upon those who wish to equate Finno-Ugric linguistic affinity to any sort of general Finno-Ugric cultural affinity.

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Vladimir Napolskikh

The Earth-Diver Myth (A812) in Northern Eurasia and North America

Twenty Years Later*

Yuri Borisovich Simchenko
in memoriam

It was almost twenty years ago that my dissertation was published (Napol'skix 1991), in which an ethno-historical interpretation was suggested for the spread across Northern Eurasia and North America of the myth of the creation of the earth from a small piece of soil brought up from the bottom of the primordial ocean by a theriomorphic, anthropomorphic or theomorphic diver (Earth-Diver myth hereafter, or, in the case of a bird diver, Diving Bird myth, DBM). This motif was demonstrated to have a very ancient (at least upper Paleolithic) origin in Northern Asia, and that in its most archaic reconstructible proto-form (designated DBM_0), the form of the divers (bird, mammal, turtle etc.) had not been important but rather the idea of among several divers, the success of the last one, possessing not physical, but a special supernatural power. Motifs close to this type are widely spread in North America, where, in the most developed versions, this ancient particularity has been retained while the concretization of the images of divers developed in different directions there: mammals, birds, turtles or even insects could appear in different local traditions (see below).

According to the suggested hypothesis, a more specialized kind of the Earth-Diver myth had already spread in Northern Eurasia in ancient times. The divers were birds here, and the main idea concerning the success of the last and the weakest diver was expressed in the rivalry between the loon, who dived first but unsuccessfully, and a kind of duck (different kinds of ducks, grebe, also rarely a swan or goose) who brought up the earth. This version was designated DBM_2. Such an opposition between a duck and a loon may be explained by the roles these birds played in a cosmology formed

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apparently more than six thousand years ago among the inhabitants of the southern part of West and Middle Siberia, first and foremost – among the ancestors of Uralic-speaking peoples and their closest linguistic relatives, the Yukagirs, and to some extent among their neighbors, the ancestors of the Tungus-Manchurians. (The probability that some portion of the ancestors of Turks and some American Indian groups belonged to this unity, referred to as the North-Asiatic Mythological Union, NAMU [Napol'skix 1991: 119–122] was also discussed as possible.) Living on the banks of the large Siberian rivers which flowed from south to the north, these people associated the south, the upper streams of the rivers with the Upper World, the world of celestial gods, and the north, the lower streams of the rivers – with the Lower World, the world of death and evil spirits. In this system, migratory water birds (ducks, swans, geese) were considered to migrate to the Upper World and therefore were considered able to mediate between mankind and the gods, whereas loons, living along the lower courses and at the mouths of the great rivers, on the shores of the Icy Sea and migrating, in pairs or alone, invisibly to the South, were considered the birds of the Lower World, with no celestial supernatural power.

DBM_2 and this associated worldview system were suggested to have been present in the culture of the Proto-Uralic speakers living in the taiga forests of Western Siberia and the Urals until the 6^{th}–4^{th} millennia BC. It was proposed that it later spread together with the Uralic population as well as partly with Tungus-Manchurian and Turkic groups into Eastern Europe and in Siberia. At every stage of its development, it should be supposed that there was also a simplified version of the myth with only one diver (DBM_1). This version eventually became the most widespread since it did

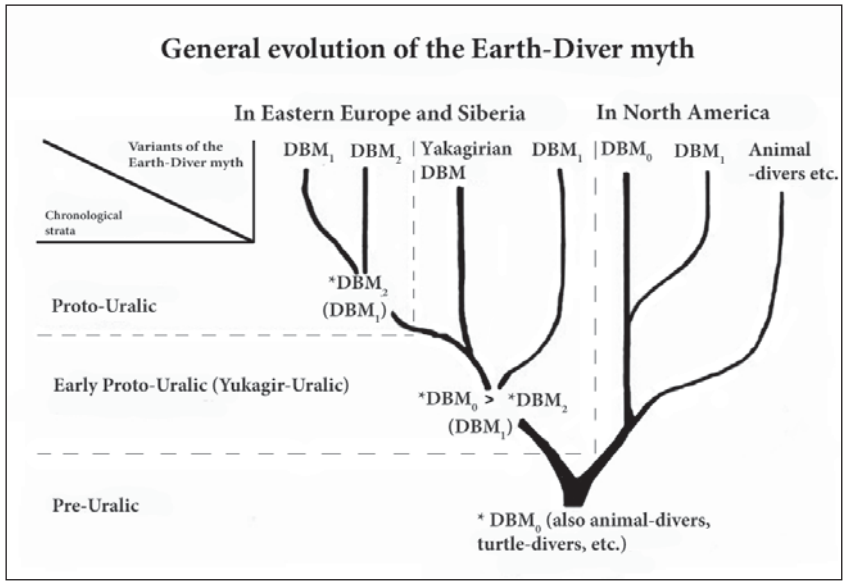


Figure 1. General scheme of evolution of the Earth-Diver / Diving Bird myth in Northern Eurasia and North America (Napol'skix 1991).

not imply the existence of the developed cosmogonical concepts underlying DBM_2 and could be easily borrowed into different traditions (observing that the creation of earth on the surface of a primordial ocean is a nearly universal motif). The general scheme of the Earth-Diver myth's evolution is represented in Figure 1.

A stadial replacement of the bird(s) by an anthropomorphic or theomorphic diver was demonstrated for Eastern Europe: a bird dives following a god's order – the devil or god himself dives, turning into a bird – the devil dives without turning to a bird but brings up the soil in his mouth (often followed by the motif of the concealment of some soil by the devil in his mouth) – the devil or god dives and brings up the soil with his hands. What is significant is that in some myths with a diving god or devil turning into a bird, the duck–loon opposition was preserved. This evolution took place moving from the North-East to the South-West: the archaic myths most similar to the Siberian DBM_2 are known among European Finno-Ugrians and Northern Russians, and the latest variants – lacking any trace of a bird – are known in the Balkans. Taking this into account, I suggested the hypothesis of a conjunction of the appearance of the Earth-Diver myth in Europe with the arrival of Finno-Ugrians, from whom it was borrowed by the East Slavs and their neighbors, penetrated into Slavic folk-Christianity (first into East Slavic, and thereafter into South Slavic), and was reshaped according to dualistic ideas of the Bogomil sect. On the grounds that most of the variants documented from European Finno-Ugrians as well as many Siberian versions of DBM do not differ at all from those known from Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian and other Christian traditions, it was argued that the Earth-Diver later came back to the Finno-Ugrians from Russian folk religion in conjunction with other apocryphal legends.

The possibility of penetration of the Earth-Diver into the Balkans with the arrival of the Hungarians and perhaps other groups of Central Asiatic or Siberian origin (first of all with the Bulgars and other Turkic groups) was also considered, though the character of the Hungarian myth and the absence (at that time) of versions of Tatar and Chuvash Earth-Diver at my disposal did not support this possibility.

This hypothesis of the Earth-Diver spread in Eurasia was also used as an additional argument for the hypothesis that the original home of Uralic languages was in West Siberia and the Urals with a subsequent movement of Finno-Ugric languages westwards into Eastern Europe, where the aboriginal Palaeo-European groups and probably some Indo-European groups were assimilated by the Uralians. This hypothesis accords with all of the linguistic, archaeological, palaeo-biogeographical and anthropological data (Napol'skix 1991: 92–121; Napol'skix 1997: 125–198). However, I was inclined to abstain from further investigations in this field owing to the nebular character of mythological data and reconstructions, the tremendous role played by the "human factor" in the development of myths, the absence of methods for verifying conclusions based on mythological reconstruction, etc. In general, my attitude toward comparative mythology is similar to my attitude toward glottochronology: there is no way to verify the conclusions, there always remain possible alternative explanations (in mythology one

should take into account the possibility of casual parallel development), but in the event that our conclusions obtain a historical (pre-historical) filling confirmed by the data and conclusions of other, independent disciplines within the frames of a historical hypothesis, these may be used as additional supporting arguments.

Nevertheless, turning back to the Earth-Diver problem now, after a break of almost twenty years (the reasons compelling me to do this will be explained below), I must say that this old hypothesis shows great vitality in its main points, and the new data received within the last decades not only do not contradict it, but, on the contrary, confirm its main theses.

The Earth-Diver in Eurasia

To begin with, I have found a number of myths which precisely fill former lacunas. Regretfully enough, the quality of most publications does not always allow a new version to be placed into the given Earth-Diver classification, but some examples are extremely significant. Perhaps the most significant and interesting is the Northern Selkup myth published by G. I. Pelix (1998: 68):

> *Num* ordered the loon *Moche-bo* to dive to the bottom of the sea and bring up the drowned earth. As a reward, *Num* offered to turn *Moche-bo* back into a human being. *Moche-bo* dove down to the bottom of the sea and found the earth but could not bring it to the surface of the waters. Then *Num* sent a duck for the earth. The duck could not bring up the earth either, but managed to break off a small piece of it and brought that up. The earth grew from this piece of soil. And *Moche-bo* remained in the form of a bird. All loons originate from him. However, loons still remember that they had once been human beings and even try to speak with people in human language.

The absence of a Selkup Earth-Diver myth seemed rather strange in the general context of my hypothesis, according to which just such an archaic DBM_2 version was expected in the Selkup tradition (Napol'skix 1991: 95, 133).

A DBM was correspondingly anticipated among the Evens, considering that the presence of the ancestors of Tungus in NAMU was almost beyond doubt. Now I have acquired a DBM of the Evens of Kamčatka and the northern part of the Magadan Oblast (Robben & Dutkin 1978: 156–158):

> The loon brought a hardly visible mote of clay from the bottom of the sea and set it in the boy's hand. 'Oh, how can one make the earth from such a small mote?' he thought. The god took the mote with the tip of his finger and put it into his left hand. The boy saw: the mote in the god's hand became as big as a squirrel's belly. He put this lump on the edge of a raft. The boy looked: the lump became as big as a reindeer roof. By evening it became as big as an elk stomach. Then he saw: in the morning his raft stood moored on the shore of an island.

Thus, the simple DBM_1 is known among the Evens. The situation with their other story is more complicated: the published version does not allow a clear understanding of the essence of the myth (Robben & Dutkin 1978: 156–158):

> There was no earth. The Evens floated at sea on a raft. They angled for fish and caught ducks with nooses. Once they caught a goose and let it go. The goose began to drive the ducks into their nooses. Then they caught a loon. The loon promised to bring a piece of soil from the bottom of the sea. Then they caught a raven and let it go because it asked them to. Three times the loon brought up a lump of soil from the bottom of the sea and each time the raven made it drop the lump back into the water. Finally a celestial shaman helped the people.

In the publication, this is followed by the statement:

> The earth was created for the people by a celestial shaman who turned a small piece of clay brought up by a loon into it. And the goose was not able to do it.

If we assume that the goose dived unsuccessfully (which is not, however, directly mentioned in the published account), we would be faced with a very special type of DBM_2 here: with a successful loon and failing bird of the "duck" class. Such a version might be expected in easternmost Siberia, where the image of the loon in local mythologies gradually obtained positive connotations in contrast to the ambivalent and negative ones corresponding to the "classic" Uralic versions of DBM_2 in the West (Napol'skix 1991: 86–88). Concerning the "eastern" tint of the Even myth, the participation of a raven in the creation is also significant: the raven is a leading image in the mythologies of northeastern Siberia and northwestern North America and takes part in very archaic DBMs of the California Indians.

Generally speaking, my old hypothesis of including of the Tungus-Manchurians – at least as a marginal group – in the NAMU, predicted the representation of DBM (most often in the simpler DBM_1) among the Tungus-Manchurian peoples of the Russian Far East (Napol'skix 1991: 107). This position has turned out to be strong enough to allow the author of a special study to treat DBM as one of the most ancient types of Tungus-Manchurian cosmogonic myths (Šan'šina 2000: 29).

Now I have also obtained new materials from the Turkic peoples of the Volga-Urals region (the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir). My hypothesis had earlier anticipated them to have variants of DBM, first and foremost those borrowed from the Russian folk Christian tradition and from the Finno-Ugric groups which had participated in their origin, but not a single concrete text had been known to me.

Of particular interest is the Bashkir story, which, as I was recently informed by my Bashkir colleague, Zakiryan Aminev, can still be documented among the southeasternmost Bashkirs even today:

> In very ancient times, the whole surface of the earth was covered by water. And once upon a time, two ducks appeared above this endless water without shores

> and limits. They swam for a long time on the water, looking for a place to lay an egg, but they could not find even a handful of soil. They did not know what to do and began to dive – so it may be supposed that these were the pochard[1] ducks. Either from the bottom or in whatever other way, they began to bring up pieces of mud to the surface. One of them held the mud under its wing, the other one brought new pieces to the first. And from the mud which they collected, something solid appeared. The mother-duck shook off some of her down and feathers and made a nest. Thereafter, she laid the eggs and sat down upon them to hatch the ducklings. A day came when the ducklings came out from the eggs, and they multiplied and began making nests and hatching ducklings, too. And there appeared a great number of nests, they stuck together and formed a sort of island. The ducks continued bringing up pieces of mud and the island grew and finally the part of it that was underwater stuck firmly on the bottom and thus a real island appeared on the endless water. The ducks felt crowded there and began to fly away and to build new islands in other places. So, in this way the ducks created the earth by bringing up small pieces of mud, sticking them together into islands and into the great land. Why do you think silt and small stones may be found in ducks' gizzards? It is precisely because the ducks have been bringing them up out of the water since very ancient times. Sometimes the ducks swallow it and silt and stones stay in their stomachs. Thus, from the ducks' silt our earth was created. (*Baškirskoe narodnoe tvorčestvo* 1987: 30–31.)

The absence of anything miraculous is a striking feature of this story, which seems to attempt a rational explanation for the origin of the earth. Similar stories about the origin of the earth from pieces of different solid substances floating on the surface of the water were widely known in Nivkh (Gilyak) mythology. One of them tells about tomtits, who gathered different objects floating on the waters and the earth grew up on this island, onto which animals and birds fell down from the sky (Krejnovič 1929: 81–83). The Bashkirian myth looks very similar to another Nivkh version, which, however, does not contain the diving theme:

> A pochard or northern shoveler duck wanted to lay an egg on the surface of the primordial waters, but there was no place. Then it plucked a feather from its breast, made a nest on the water, laid the eggs and hatched the ducklings. Its offspring subsequently made nests on the water in this way. The nests came together into an island where soil and plants appeared, and thus the earth was created. (*Legendy i mify* 1985: 288.)

It is hardly possible that the Bashkirian and Nivkh stories are immediately connected to each other. It is more reasonable to consider them as two peripheral DBM versions, both of which have resulted from the "rational" reinterpretation of the original myth; what is important is that the Bashkirian story preserved the concept of diving. On the other hand, the presence of two ducks assuming different roles in the creation is reminiscent of DBM_2, which was anticipated among the Bashkirs when taking into account the participation of Ugrian (ancient Hungarian) groups in their origins. As I have shown elsewhere (Napol'skix 1991: 142), the Hungarians did not

have DBM_2 as such: only versions with a theomorphic diver (typical for the Balkans) are found among them. The possibility of the existence of an early Hungarian version of DBM_2 was suggested on the basis of images on the Hungarian phaloera from the 9th century (Alföldi 1969). If the image of the eagle may be supposed to have disappeared as a result of later ideas of God the Creator, this picture might also serve as an illustration of the Bashkirian story.

Three Chuvash DBM_1 variants are remarkable. These present "a small bird", a duck and two pigeons diving for the soil (Stan'jal 2004: 29–30): since God the Creator is absent, these are rather different from normal East European apocryphal creation legends and may be compared to certain very particular Komi myths. On the other hand, the Chuvash also had a "normal" apocryphal story in which the Devil dived following God's order, concealed some soil, and so forth (Stan'jal 2004: 25). This version was documented in the 19th century whereas the previous three were only documented at the end of the 20th century, hence the latter may be explained as a result of development during the Soviet period and the degradation of the image of the divine creator in the course of a general decline of the folk-Christian tradition. However, the presence of the birds (including a duck) in the stories can hardly be coincidental and must be rooted in an earlier Chuvash DBM.

A corresponding reconstruction of the archaic myth lacking a divine creator but presenting a diving bird is possible in the Volga-Turkic tradition on the basis of a very dilapidated version of DBM found in Kazan Tatar folklore (Gyjləžetdinov 1987: 232).

The Sibir Tatar DBM variants differ from the Chuvash and Kazan Tatar stories:

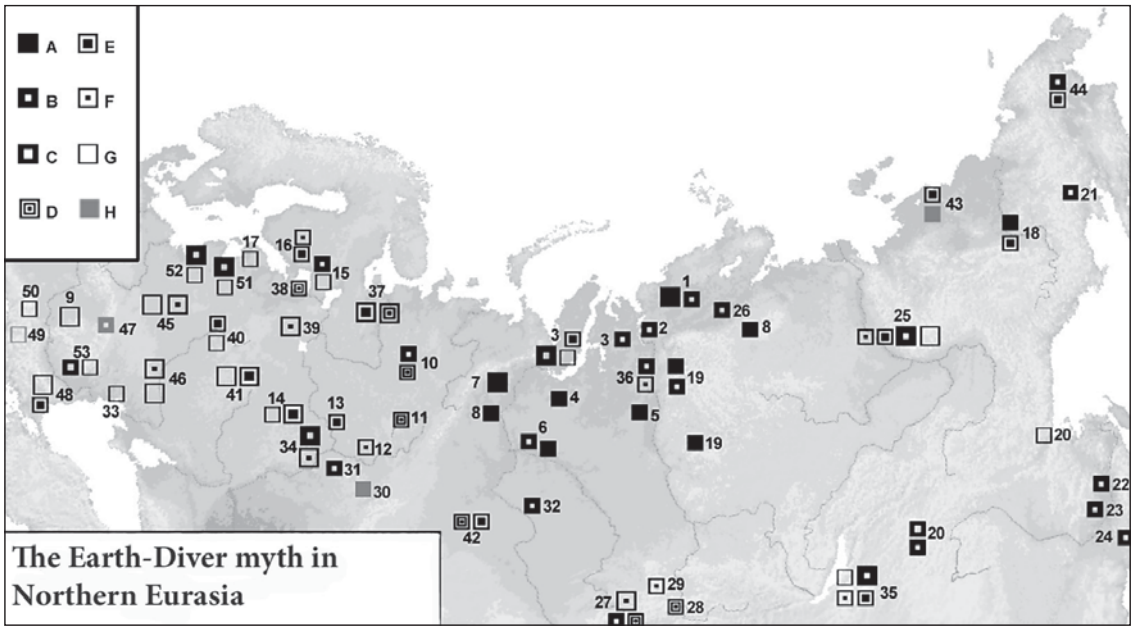
Tevriz District, Omsk Oblast

> On the great primordial expanse of water swam two ducks. One of them decided to create the earth from silt (or from clay, in other variant). The other dived and brought up the silt in its beak. The first duck threw it around the water and the earth appeared. The other duck went out onto the earth and began throwing around stones, and thus the mountains appeared. (Urazaleev 2004a.)

Tara District, Omsk Oblast

> *Tengri*, the supreme god, sent his bird, the swan, to bring up the earth from the sea bottom. The swan did this. As the earth was created, *Tengri* first settled evil spirits there. They did not obey him and he banished them into the dark forests. Thereafter he made the first people from clay. And the swan has become a sacred bird. (Urazaleev 2004b.)

The first of these presents a story very similar to the Bashkirian version, probably deriving from DBM_2, while the second presents a rare example of a diving swan. The East European apocrypha simply cannot be the source of both versions and they may therefore reflect an archaic Turkic tradition



Map 1. The distribution of the DBM in Northern Eurasia.

Squares indicate variants. Size: Smaller squares indicate 1–2 versions known from a particular group; larger squares indicate 3 or more. Typology: A: DBM$_2$, full version with two diving birds (the "duck" succeeds, the loon does not); B: DBM$_1$, only one bird (duck or loon) dives and brings up the earth; C: a frog or turtle dives; D: a theomorphic or anthropomorphic diver (or two divers) which turns into a bird or appears as a bird from the very beginning, with the diving of two such birds, as in DBM$_2$; E: as (D) with the diving of only one such bird, as in DBM$_1$; F: the theomorphic or anthropomorphic diver does not turn into a bird, but brings the earth in his mouth; G: the theomorphic or anthropomorphic diver does not turn into a bird and brings the earth in his hands; H (pale signs): versions similar to (A–G) with some type of decline from the "classical" DBMs (e.g. diving but not for the earth, the act of diving is not mentioned, etc.).

Numbers indicate peoples and ethnic groups. Uralo-Yukagir family: 1: Nganasan; 2: Enets; 3: Tundra Nenets; 4: Forest Nenets; 5: Northern Selkups; 6: Eastern Khanty; 7: Nortehrn Mansi; 8: Eastern Mansi; 9: Hungarians; 10: Komi-Zyrians; 11: Komi-Permiaks; 12: Udmurts; 13: Mari; 14: Mordvins (Mokshas and Erzias); 15: Karelians; 16: Eastern Finns; 17: Southern Estonians; 18: Kolyma Yukagirs. Altaic family: 19: Western Evenki; 20: Eastern Evenki (Orochons, Chumikans etc.); 21: Evens; 22: Negidals; 23: Nanai; 24: Udege; 25: Northern Yakuts; 26: Dolgans; 27: Altai Turks (Altai-Kizhi, Kuu-Kizhi); 28: Khakas; 29: Shors; 30: Bashkirs; 31: Kazan Tatars; 32: Sibir Tatars; 33: Gagauz; 34: Chuvash; 35: Buryats. Yenissean family: 36: Kets. Indo-European family: 37: Northern Russians (Arxangel'sk); 38: Northern Russians (Olonec & Zaonež'e); 39: Northern Russians (Kostroma, Vologda, Vjatka); 40: Western Russians (Smolensk); 41: Central and Southern Russians (Tver', Nižnij Novgorod, Rjazan', Tula, Orjol); 42: Russians in Western Siberia; 43: Russians of Russkoe Ust'e (Indigirka); 44: Russians and Chuvans of Markovo (Čukotka); 45: Belorussians; 46: Ukranians; 47: Western (Trans-Carpathian) Ukranians; 48: Bulgarians; 49: Serbs and Montenegros; 50: Slovenians; 51: Latvians; 52: Lithuanians; 53: Rumanians.

or – what seems to me more probable – reflect traditions of Ugrian and/or Samoyed peoples assimilated into Siberian Tatar groups.

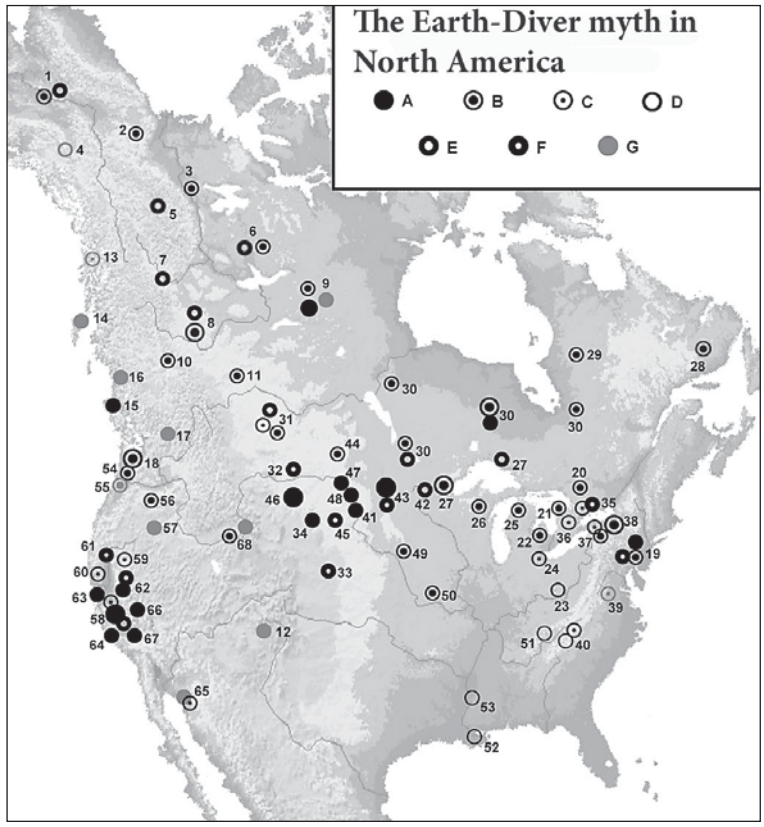
Map 1 presents the distribution of DBM in Eurasia. The new data obtained during last twenty years confirm the main points of the hypothesis formed at the beginning of the 1990s to account for the origin of DBM and the ethnohistorical background of its dissemination in Eurasia.

The Earth-Diver in North America

My American materials have also been significantly enlarged – thanks in part to the zealous work of Juri Berëzkin. The material on the Earth-Diver in Berëzkin's catalogue (Berëzkin [*s.d.*]) exceeds that in Anna-Birgitta Rooth's thesaurus, of which I used a manuscript version in the 1990s.[2] Map 2 shows the distribution of the expanded data. Generally speaking, the old conclusions have also been confirmed by the new data in this case. First of all, the Earth-Diver is not known south of the U.S. territory in any relevant form. A couple of examples were documented among members of the Seri nation living in Sonora, Mexico, on the northeast coast of the Gulf of California. Nonetheless, these belong to the cultural world of the Penuti and Hoka Indians of Southern and Central California, although the relationship of the Seri language to the Hoka language family has not been demonstrated (Campbell 1997: 160).

The last five versions from Central and South America presented in Berëzkin's Earth-Diver collection do not as a rule contain the theme of diving itself (often it includes destroying the dam that caused the deluge) and – what is most significant – they are scattered over a vast territory from Mexico to Amazonia, and do not form a solid or expressive enough area. Thus the conclusion that the Earth-Diver was absent south of the U.S. territory is sustained. The broadening of materials from the Americas makes it possible to define the next areas, which are clearly connected with particular ethno-linguistic groups, and this principally coincides with my earlier observations.

A standard plot with consecutively diving mammals is spread across the Sub-Arctic and northern forests (mainly among the Algonquian and Athabascan peoples): attempts are made by a beaver, an otter and finally a muskrat, the last succeeding in bringing up the earth (the weakest diver's success – the main idea of DBM_0). It is significant that the Algonquians (Arapaho and Gros-Ventres, Cheyenne, Blackfoot) living farthest away from the late original Algonquian homelands (following Siebert 1967) have stories, in which birds appear as divers (i.e. a pure DBM_0), because these groups probably departed from that homeland in an early period. Often a turtle also appears, serving as support of the newly created earth or diving together with the birds. This draws these myths together with some Algonquian and Iroquois versions from the Great Lakes region in particular, as well as, on the other hand, with Central and Southern Californian traditions. It is significant that the birds bring up the earth in these versions – in contrast to some variants with diving mammals (Ojibwe,



Map 2. The distribution of the DBM in North America.

Circles indicate variants. Size: Smaller circles indicate 1–2 versions known from a particular group; larger circles indicate 3 or more. Typology: A: diving birds (rarely: one bird); B: diving mammals (beaver, otter, muskrat); C: diving turtle (rarely: frog); D: diving arthropodes (crawfish, lobster, beetle); E: diving mammals and birds; F: diving birds (or, rarely, mammals) and turtle; G (pale signs): versions similar to (A–F) with some type of decline from the "classical" DBMs (e.g. diving but not for the earth, the act of diving is not mentioned, etc.).

Numbers indicate peoples and ethnic groups. (A question mark indicates that a particular linguistic affiliation is not clear.) Na-Dene family: 1: Koyukon and Kuskoquim; 2: Kutchin; 3: Hare and Slavy; 4: Upper Tanaina; 5: Yellowknife; 6: Dogrib; 7: Kaska; 8: Biever; 9: Chipewyan; 10: Carrier; 11: Sarsi; 12: Navaho; 13: (?)Tlingit. Haida: 14: Haida. Wakashan family: 15: Kwakiutl (Newettee). Salishan family: 16: Bella-Coola; 17: Shuswap and Thompson; 18: Coast Salish (Upper Chehalis, Tillamook). Algonquian-Ritwan family: 19: Delaware; 20: Algonquin; 21: Ottawa; 22: Sauk and Fox; 23: Shawnee; 24: Kickapoo; 25: Potawatomi; 26: Menominee; 27: Ojibwe (incl. Salteaux and Chippewa); 28: Montagnais; 29: Naskapi; 30: Cree (Swampy, Plain etc.); 31: Blackfoot; 32: Atsina (Gros-Ventres); 33: Southern Arapaho; 34: Cheyenne. Iroquoian family: 35: Huron; 36: Wyandot (or Huron, or Petun); 37: Seneca; 38: Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk; 39: Tuscarora; 40: Cherokee. Caddoan family: 41: Arikara. Siouan family: 42: Santee (Mdewakanton-Dakota); 43: Dakota (Minitaree and Wahpeton); 44: Nakota (Assiniboin); 45: Lakota (Teton); 46: Crow; 47: Hidatsa; 48: Mandan; 49: Iowa; 50: Quapaw; 51: (?) Yuchi. Muscogean family: 52: (??) Chitimacha; 53: Alabama-Koasati. Chinookan family: 54: Chinook; 55: Cathlamet. Sahaptin family: 56: Molala; 57: Modoc. California Penuti family: 58: Yokuts (different groups); 59: Miwok 60: Patwin; 61: Wintu; 62: Maidu. Hoka family: 63: Pomo; 64: (?) Salinan; 65: (??) Seri. Uto-Aztecan family: 66: Western Mono; 67: Tübatulabal and Kawaiisu; 68: Northern Shoshoni.

Koyukon, Kutchin, etc.), in which a bird (very often a loon) is mechanically added to the number of unsuccessful divers (beaver and otter as a rule) and does not play any important role. The birds bring up the earth not only among the Prairie Algonquians but also in other peripheral myths of the Algonquian-Athabaskan diving mammals area – i.e. in Delaware, Kaska, Beaver, Chipewyan and Yellowknife versions. This picture may be interpreted as resulting from a comparatively late (hardly older than two thousand years) formation of the "classic" diving mammals plot (beaver, otter and muskrat) in the central-western part of Great Lakes basin and/or to the north of it considering the more archaic variants in which different divers – including birds – took part. The same area was the centre for the development of the cycle about the trickster-rabbit (*Nenabozho* among the Ojibwe), with which the Algonquian-Athabaskan diving mammals plot (with its deluge theme) is associated.

On the other hand, a group of developed and representative diving mammals myths, which are strikingly similar to the Algonquian-Athabaskan myths, spread within a relatively tight area in Washington, mainly among the Salish peoples, and does not allow this plot to be considered exclusively of late and eastern origin. If we accept the hypothesis that the early Algonquian-Ritwan original home was in the Columbia River basin with later supplanting of the Algonquians by the Salish, the diving mammals plot may be considered a very ancient Proto-Algonquian innovation brought by them to the east and which then penetrated from them into the Salish and Athabaskan groups. Regretfully enough, we do not have versions of a Yurok or Wiyot Earth-Diver to support this suggestion.

In the north of Central California (some California Penuti groups), and sporadically in other places, the turtle appears as the successful diver. In the Great Lakes basin (mainly among the Iroquois) it is the frog that brings up the earth and puts it on the turtle's back. These two versions are probably a result of a mixture of two ancient North American and North Eurasian mythologemes: the Earth-Diver and the turtle as support of the earth. I see no reason to look for special connections between Penuti and Iroquois areas.

In two other regions, the divers were birds as in Eurasiatic DBMs: on the Northern Plains (mainly among Sioux and western Algonquians) and in Central California (among the California Penuti and some of their neighbors). Some nebular reminiscences of diving birds are also recorded north of California, but a real DBM has probably only been documented there once (among the Newettee-Kwakiutl). The North American DBMs should not obligatorily be considered as more archaic myths than those with diving mammals, a turtle, etc.: the choice of birds as divers might have taken place independently in North America. However, two observations deserve to be taken into account. First, as noted above, birds appear as divers in the myths on the periphery of the Algonquian-Athabaskan area, which means that either they had not been embraced by a later innovation (the diving mammals plot), or they had been influenced by local substrata – and both of these explanations warrant considering these bird versions more archaic. Second, it seems significant that the birds appear together with a

turtle almost everywhere – in California, on the Plains, east of the Great Lakes basin and even in the southernmost region of the North American Earth-Diver version, the one of the Seri in Mexico – and this systematic connection between birds and a turtle in North America can hardly be explained as pure coincidence. Conversely, they are not to be considered as ancient parallels to the myths with a diving turtle encountered in Eurasia – these versions are known in South Siberia, where they are most reasonably attributable to Indian influence, and in Romania (Beza 1928: 122–123), to which they could also have been carried by Gypsies with a history that eventually traces back to India.

A few versions with diving crawfish, shrimp or beetle have been documented in the Southeastern U.S. and cannot be associated with any single ethno-linguistic group (Southern Iroquois, Muskogean or Yuchi). Notwithstanding their small number and evidently marginal position, these are interesting owing to the intriguing parallels of areal distribution of Earth-Diver myths in Eurasia and North America. In the Old World, some variants with arthropoda and even worms bringing up the earth are also known, and these are spread in the south, separate from the North-Eurasiatic DBM massif. This deserves a special consideration, which I had avoided in previous studies.

Historical and Geographic Peripheries

All of the stories comparable to northern DBMs from Southern and Southeastern Asia which are found in Berëzkin's catalogue may be divided into three groups:[3]

1. A giant arthropod (crawfish, crab, shrimp) or rarely a turtle, which can touch bottom of the ocean and the sky with its claws, brings the earth from the bottom of the sea. This is found among the Munda groups of Orissa and Madhya-Pradesh (Bhumiya / Bhumij, Baiga, Saora / Sora, Agariya); Central Dravida (Gondi). For the last of these, a Munda substratum can be supposed; among the Gondi and Agariya this plot is combined with the second. (The turtle probably appears here as a result of influence form the Indian tradition of a turtle supporting the earth coupled with the widespread affiliation in folklore of the turtle with the frog, toad, crawfish and crab as belonging to one and the same class of creatures.)

   There is no act of diving, and it is not necessary here. The main figure (a giant arthropod) is alien to North Eurasiatic myths. Bringing up the earth has no magical quality in this plot (rather than a small piece of soil, solid land can be simply lifted up out of the sea). This plot may be associated with the motif of a giant spider spinning a web between earth and sky, which is also widely known in this region. The North American Earth-Diver heroes are never giants, but, quite the contrary, they are small creatures corresponding to the central concept of DBM_0, and their functions are utterly different and can hardly be connected with the DBMs of South and Southeast Asia.

2. A sea worm or a leech is brought up from silt / from the sea / (rarely) from the bottom of the sea and contains some soil (very often it is a part of the earth that existed before the deluge or of the earth that had been swallowed by the worm). This soil is squeezed out of the worm or it belches it forth and thus the earth is (re)created. This is found among the Munda (Birhor of Jarkhand, Mundari, Santali, Bonda / Remo, Baiga, Agariya; here the worm very often dives to the bottom for the mud or someone dives for the worm), Central Dravida (Gondi; here as well as among the Agariya this plot is combined with the first), Tibeto-Burman groups of Assam (Mikir / Karbi), Mon-Khmer groups of Malaysia (Semang; Mikir and Semang do not tell about diving, the worm's excrement simply falls down from the sky), Malaya-Polynesians (Kayan on Borneo; here it was not the earth that was created from the worm's excrement, only the fertile soil).

   This main figure is not known in the Earth-Diver myth of Northern Eurasia. In most cases these stories tell not about the creation, but about a re-creation of the earth after a catastrophe (the worm swallows the earth) or about the origin of fertile soil (in Southeast Asia). The general manner of creation differs from the "normal" Earth-Diver myth. The myths of the Mikir, Semang and Kayan are rather different from the myths of the Munda and one should ask whether these plots should be brought together at all. Diving for the earth is actually mentioned only in the myths of Birhor, Mundari and Santali (a turtle, crab and fish dive unsuccessfully and the leech brings up the earth) – among all the South-Asiatic examples, only these variants may be compared with the Northern Eurasian and North American Earth-Diver myths, and in particular – with those of the Southeastern U.S. It is also significant that these myths belong predominantly to Munda-speaking peoples (a Munda substratum can be supposed for the Gondi). On the other hand, we do not find the main theme – the success of the weakest diver – of the North American and Northern Eurasian Earth-Diver myths in these southern plots, and they simply look like naturalistic stories.
3. A wild boar (*Prajapati* as the wild boar *Emuša* in the *Śatapadha-Brahmana*), who lived in the primordial waters, brings up the earth from the bottom with its tusks or, having been covered with silt and mud on the bottom of the waters or in the lower world, brings it up on his bristles. The plot appears in the earliest *Brahmanas* (*Śatapadha-Brahmana* XIV) and folklore versions are known from Munda (Didayi / Gatak, Bonda / Remo), Central Dravida (Koya, Gondi), and the texts and names used in them clearly show that the plot penetrated into the folklore tradition from brahmanistic literature.

   It is not the sea that is meant in the beginning of this story, but a swamp-like or slush-like primordial chaos. The way the earth is obtained is not the same as in the northern Earth-Diver myths: the diving is not necessary here and wild-boar is in no way a diver and not a water animal at all. The plot is also unknown in the North. On the other hand, the boar is a symbol of divine male strength in the Aryan culture and therefore its appearance in the creation myth may be explained as a result of a Vedic

reassessment of the Earth-Diver motif, which could have been borrowed by the Aryans from a Munda (?) substratum.

In addition to myths of these three types, Berëzkin's catalogue contains three more stories, which may be formally compared with Earth-Diver: among the Garo of Assam (of Tibeto-Burman language stock) crabs dive to the bottom of the primordial ocean unsuccessfully and a beetle brings up the earth; among the Shan (of the Tai family) ants dive for the earth; among the Dayaks (of the Austronesian family) two mythical birds brought two pieces of hard substance from the waters (it is not clear whether this was by diving), and the earth and the sky were created from them. The Garo story is the most interesting and comparable with Semang (see above) and American Earth-Divers. The diving ants look strange in Shan myth, and this leads to a suspicion that there has been a mistake in translation. The idea of creating the sky is utterly alien to North Eurasiatic and North American Earth-Divers, and there is the problem of whether the diving took place at all in the Dayak story. All three of these stories are scattered a great distance from one another and they do not form an isogloss.

Thus, if some of the Munda versions (the second plot above) can be compared with Northern Eurasiatic and North American Earth-Diver myths, one may suppose that very ancient myths with diving animals (more probably arthropoda, worms and (?) turtles) were known in South Asia to some Austroasiatic (possibly Munda) groups. This, however, does not mean that these myths must have appeared in the south as they might have been brought from the north. In this case, the links between South Asia and Siberia must be sought in Central and East China, irrespective of the direction of diffusion of the myths. The Yangshao culture provided a frame for the interaction of diverse ethnolinguistic groups from the 5th or early 4th to the early 3rd millennium BC. In this era, Austroasiatic groups inhabited an area from the middle Yangzi River probably up to the middle Yellow River basin, Austronesian groups inhabited East China from Shandong to Fujian, and to the lower reaches of Huanghe and Yangzi, while Sino-Tibetan groups arrived from the west coming down the Yellow River. The interaction of these groups – and possibly other ethnoliguistic groups of unknown linguistic affiliation as well – may have provided the cradle for contacts between South Asia and Siberia in the environment of the Yangshao culture. It should be mentioned that images of frogs, fish etc. are present on the ceramics of middle Yellow River cultures (Miaodigou, Majiayao, Banpo) which offer interesting compositions that could be taken into consideration in further studies. It also makes sense to look in old sources for possible reminiscences of the Earth-Diver myth in Chinese traditions – among the various Han groups as well as among Austroasiatic peoples of China and in Taiwan and possibly also on the Ryukyu Islands.

If it is considered reasonable to hypothesize that archaic Earth-Diver myths present in South Asia have ancient genetic connections to the Northern Eurasiatic and North American examples, then the myths with diving arthropoda in the Southwestern U.S. might be considered corresponding archaisms preserved on the periphery of the North American area of Earth-

Diver traditions. In this case, however, it is necessary to suppose that the Earth-Diver came to North America at least twice: first in this early version from East Asia with diving arthropoda (and perhaps worms and turtles), and later from Siberia in the form of the more developed DBM_0 with its central conception of the weakest diver's success owing to its supernatural powers and, probably, with birds as the main divers. I do not see any principal objections to this hypothesis.

Another aspect of the earlier study that demands a certain reconsideration and probable correction is the origin and evolution of the European Earth-Diver myths. Their distribution in Europe is restricted to peoples belonging to the Slavic Orthodox cultural world (Russians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Serbians, Romanians, Karelians, Komi, Mordvinians etc.) or their neighbors who were also seriously influenced by these cultures (Hungarians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Finns, etc.). Most of the East European Earth-Diver versions represent dualistic folk-Christian creation legends, in which the Christian God and his assistant/rival are the actors, sometimes assuming ornithomorphic forms. The most ancient examples of these legends (which only exhibit theomorphic/anthropomorphic divers) come from Bulgaria and belong to the set of (post-)Bogomil apocrypha ("The Legend of the Tiberian Sea"). These would have already become very popular in Russia in the 10th–14th centuries. The ornithomorphic divers only appear in the northern and north-eastern periphery of this area – among Northern Russians and their Baltic and Finno-Ugric neighbors, as well as among some Siberian peoples who had been influenced by Russian folk-Christianity (see Map 1). I therefore supposed that the appearance of the Earth-Diver in Eastern Europe had been connected with Finno-Ugrians. The motif had been borrowed by the Slavs, among whom it spread and where the ornithomorphic diver was replaced with a theomorphic / anthropomorphic diver, after which it was integrated into the Orthodox folk-Christian tradition. This occurred first in the Balkans and then returned to the North, where it was borrowed back from the Russians by Finno-Ugrians in this newly developed form. According to this hypothesis, versions known among Northern Russians and Finno-Ugrians, which presented an ornithomorphic diver or a diver that turned into a bird, were considered relicts of ancient pre-Christian and pre-Slavic North Eurasiatic traditions (which for Eastern Europe was originally the Finno-Ugrian one). Later this hypothesis was principally accepted by the author of a brilliant study on the Orthodox folk-Christian dualistic legends (Kuznecova 1998).

However, today I no longer consider this hypothesis to be the only solution capable of accounting for all of the data. Its weakness is in the proposal of a spread of the Earth-Diver from East Slavs to South Slavs with a subsequent integration into the apocryphal tradition: as a rule, medieval cultural influences – and those associated with the religious sphere in particular – moved in the opposite direction. Accordingly, an alternative interpretation, which seems to be at least as well-based as the previous one, should be taken into consideration. In the light of the facts demonstrating a very ancient and wide distribution of the Earth-Diver in Northern Eurasia, its original affiliation with exclusively Uralic-speaking

groups in Eastern Europe no longer seems viable. The dissemination of this motif from the Balkans to the North, demonstrated by written sources, may reflect its penetration into the traditions of South Slavs via the southern steppe, carried by groups of Central Asian origin in the Hunnic and post-Hunnic periods (i.e. 4th–7th centuries). The first natural candidates for the role of carriers of the Earth-Diver motif to Europe must, in this case, be the Bulgar-Turks – particularly given the presence of interesting versions of DBM among the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir. However, considering that the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir DBM may be explained as a heritage of Finno-Ugric substrata, the problem of the presence of the Earth-Diver motif in the early medieval Bulgar tradition remains unsolved.

The Avars are other probable carriers of the Earth-Diver to Europe via the steppe, owing first of all to their role in the early history of the Southern Slavs, who had conquered the Balkans together with the Avars and under their power. These intimate relations between the Avars and the Slavs on the fields of war and politics must have left some traces in the Slavic religion and mythology. Though this problem has not yet been researched, it seems inevitable: the Avar influence on the South Slavs in the 6th–7th centuries is evident. The problem of the linguistic affiliation of the Avars is also far from resolved. The traditional assertion that the Avars were Turks is in general nothing more than a pure *ad hoc* supposition. Undoubtedly, after the death of *kagan* Bayan ['Bayan Khan'] in the 7th century, the percentage of Bulgar-Turks among them increased ever more across the 8th–9th centuries, but this does not imply a Turkic origin of the original kernel of the Avars. In this respect, Eugene Helimski's attempt to read the well-known "Avar" inscription from the Nagy-Szentmiklos treasure (9th century) as being written in a Tungus-Manchu language becomes very interesting (Xelimskij 2000). This reading of the Nagy-Szentmiklos inscription differs from several "Turkic" interpretations, being the only one to start from the material rather than from an *a priori* assumption that the language of the inscription is Turkic, with the subsequent selection of more or less similar words and forms from various Turkic languages.

The Tungus-Manchu affiliation of the Avars (or at least of the kernel of the Avar union) may find support in other data as well. To the facts adduced by Helimski, I could add the following suggestion. The origin of the European Avars is customarily connected with the Central Asian Ruanruans. The Ruanruan state (the first *kaganat*, actually, considering that the very term *kagan* ['Khan'] made its first appearance among the Ruanruans) spread its power from Manchuria to Lake Balkhash across the 5th–6th centuries. The two most popular variants of the Chinese transcription of the name of this people are 柔蠕 *róu-rǎn* (? / *-rán*) < Middle Chinese **ńuw-ńwi̯anʔ* and 蠕蠕 *ruǎn-ruǎn* (? / *rán-rán*) < Middle Chinese * *ńwi̯anʔ-ńwi̯anʔ*. These bear a strikingly resemblance to the self-nominations widely known among the Tungus-Manchu people even today. These have the meaning "local, of the (local) land" – cf. the name of the Nanai, *nānaj ~ nāńi / nāńu ~ nānńu* or Ulcha*, nāńī*.

Taking into account the supposition that Tungus-Manchu groups belonged to the ancient bearers of DBM in Eurasia, the appearance of the

Earth-Diver among the (South) Slavs may be connected to the period of Avar-Slavic symbiosis in the 6th century, when the Tungus-Manchu myth could have been borrowed from the Avars by the Slavs. (It is interesting to note that the phaloera mentioned above, illustrating an archaic version of DBM, might originate not from Hungarians but from Avars.) Subsequently this motif could be included in the (pre-)Bogomil apocryphal corpus in the Southern Slavic tradition. As the dualistic legends spread to the north, the most archaic versions (with ornithomorphic diver[s]) were preserved on the periphery – mainly in the Russian tradition and among the Finno-Ugrians of Eastern Europe who borrowed the Russian legends. The later versions reflecting Christian ideas appeared where the proper Bogomil dualistic influences were stronger, at the centre of its irradiation – in the Balkans, among the Southern Slavs, Ukrainians etc. Here, the birds were replaced by God and/or the Devil, who first turned into a bird in order to dive and later appeared in anthropomorphic shape. Eventually, the motif of diving for earth – which had no background in Christian mythology – was eliminated from the legends. A good example of this development can be observed in the western Ukrainian tradition, where the motif of a bird bringing up earth was again preserved on the periphery, only in this case it was not the geographical periphery but in a peripheral genre: DBM existed in *koljadki*-songs, whereas the diver was already purely theomorphic in more "serious" texts. Thus the more archaic Earth-Diver versions brought from the Balkans could meet the local old Finno-Ugrian DBMs in the Russian North and thus the observable mapping of variation and distribution came into being (Napol'skix 2008).

I am in no way inclined to insist on this latter scenario (i.e. that the main source for the East European Earth-Diver is the Balkans, and that the archaic forms in the North are a reflection of their older, pre-Bogomil creation) and to neglect the scenario discussed earlier (i.e. that the spread of DBM from Finno-Ugrians to the Slavs with a gradual degradation of the motif and eventual return from the Balkans to the North). Both possibilities must be taken into account.

Earth-Diver Myths and Genetic Research

The last complex of problems is connected with the development of molecular genetic studies across recent decades and their applications in the study of ethnic history. As a matter of fact, it was contact with scholars in this field that led me to return to DBM in recent years. The point is that, oddly enough, some results of molecular genetics correlate with my hypothesis on the origin and spread of DBM. Since comparative mythology deals, in any case, with materials far more changeable and hardly subject to any sort of strict analysis, I did not see any way for the verification of my conclusions before: there always remained the possibility of alternative explanations, both general (e.g. casual or typological coincidence of cosmogonic myths) and particular explanations. However, the hypothesis made on the mythological materials can be considered substantiated by the

correlation of the distribution of myths and genetic markers – this means, between two utterly independent data sets, coupled with the possibility of constructing a historical model as an explanation for this correlation.

The haplogroups of Y-chromosomes, which are inherited by males, from father to son, are the concern here. Distributions of three of these haplogroups reveal a correlation with one of the Earth-Diver myths. The first of these is the N1c (N3) haplogroup, which, following the geneticists' assessment, appeared about fourteen thousand years ago in Siberia or in Northwest China, and is represented among Yakuts, Balts, Finno-Ugrians and Russians. Even more interesting is the related haplogroup N1b (N2), which is dated to 8–6 thousand years ago and located in Siberia and Eastern Europe among Samoyeds, Finno-Ugrians, Siberian Eskimo, Turks, Mongols and Tungus. (Rootsi et al. 2007.)[4] The distribution of these haplogroups, their age and probable place of origin principally coincide with the proposed distribution of the most ancient DBM in Eurasia (N1c), and for the Proto-Uralic (and Tungus) DBM_2 (N1b) in particular. Some exceptions are inevitable, such as, for example, the Eskimo, among whom no DBM is known, but these do not compromise the overall picture.

As for the American (and probably South Asian) Earth-Diver, another striking parallel is encountered in the genetic data in haplogroup C3. This haplogroup, dated to 11.9 ± 4.8 thousand years ago, is represented in Eurasia among the Tungus-Manchu, Mongolian, Turkic peoples, Nivkhs and Yukagirs, and in North America among the Na-Dene, Cheyenne, and Siouan groups (Hua Zhong et al. 2010). This is, in fact, the only Eurasian haplogroup which is also found in the Americas, where the typical Amerindian haplogroup Q predominates.[5] This haplogroup is also interesting because its origin is connected with other variants of the ancient haplogroup C most probably having its homeland in Southern and South-Eastern Asia.

Thus, it is possible to suggest that the Earth-Diver existed at the end of the Paleolithic era among the population whose male descendants belong to the N1b, N1c and C3 Y-chromosome haplogroups. The first two could originate in Northern Asia, and the development of DBM_2 in Proto-Yukagir-Uralic and Proto-Tungus-Manchu traditions may be connected with them. The bearers of C3 would have known more archaic versions of the Earth-Diver myth, and its dissemination in North America and (probably) in South Asia may be ascribed to them.

This raises some legitimate questions: What is the reason for this correlation between myths and genes? How could the mythological motif spread in the same directions as particular Y-chromosome haplogroups? Why does the same correlation not exist between myths and languages? To my mind, some preliminary answers may be suggested here. They are based on the fact that we are dealing with Y-chromosomes inherited by the male line. It is well known that the creation myths of the Native Americans belonged to the most sacred part of their folklore, that they were connected to closed rituals, in which only the men participated, and thus were transmitted from father to son. The exact same situation existed in aboriginal Siberia. At the end of the 19th century, Bernát Munkácsi, the

greatest collector and researcher of Mansi folklore and religion, described the manner of Mansi sacred story telling in the following way (his comments concern the developed versions of Mansi DBM_2 which he documented):

> The legends are considered sacred (*jelpi\ mōjt*), in which the most important subjects of the Mansi song and story-telling tradition are related: those concerning the creation of the earth and consequent organization of the world, concerning the young heroic deeds of the most revered god, the World-Surveying Man [….] Therefore, as a rule, these legends concerned with ancient events underlying all life-order accompanied the religious festivals. Special attitudes and the pious attention of the people present were noticeable at that time, as well as concrete ceremonial manifestations such as placing silver objects (e.g. coins) on the table, entertaining the story-teller with good meals and drinks. In addition, when the story reached particular points, the women (who were less pure creatures, according to Mansi and Khanty conceptions) had to leave the room where the story was being told, and according to stricter rules, the women were banned completely from the place during story-telling. (Munkácsi 1892–1902: 175.)

It therefore appears that a mechanism existed which ensured the transmission of cosmogonic myths by the male ancestral line – a line which certainly coincided with the inheritance of Y-chromosomes to some degree. On the other hand, a myth could be borrowed and re-told in another language. The parallel processes of the transmission of genetic material according to the biological lineage of males in society on the one hand, and the social structuring of the transmission of cosmogonic mythological traditions according to those male lines on the other, would offer an explanation for the paradox of the correlation between the distribution of one of the most widely known cosmogonic myths of the Northern hemisphere and Y-chromosome haplogroups, even where these do not fully correlate with purely linguistic heritage.

Notes

1 Russian term for "pochard" (нырок) means literally "diver".
2 Anna-Birgitta Rooth was kind enough to allow me to look at this manuscript while visiting her home in Uppsala in 1991. For an abridged published version, see Rooth 1957, particularly important is the map on page 500.
3 The degree to which Berëzkin's materials are representative in this case is somewhat problematic. I lack any better collection of Southern and South-Eastern Asiatic creation myths, but insofar as the majority of them were already represented in O. Dähnhardt's (1907) collection, the following discussion seems reasonable.
4 A brief introduction to these haplogroups can be found in Wikipedia, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_N_(Y-DNA).
5 See the brief introduction to this haplogroup in Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_C3_(Y-DNA).

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II

Sampo

Lotte Tarkka

The Sampo

Myth and Vernacular Imagination

The myth of the *sampo* is the aesthetic and ideological center of the *Kalevala*. The narrative of the epic is built on the tension between two peoples, the people of Kaleva, led by the singer and sage Väinämöinen, and the people of the North, led by the mistress Louhi. The tension culminates in the battle over the *sampo*. This wealth-bringing object was forged for Louhi by the smith Ilmarinen and eventually stolen from the North by Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen. In a battle fought at sea, the *sampo* is lost, but parts of it drift ashore. The lands of Väinämöinen start growing and the North is impoverished. The sea, however, becomes plentiful in catch and salt.

Lönnrot knew the tale of the *sampo* from two sources before he witnessed a performance of the Sampo-Cycle in person. The first of these was Carl Axel Gottlund's concise account from Dalecarlia, documented among the Finnish immigrant population of central and western Sweden in 1818 (Gottlund 1818: 10–11, *SKVR* VII_5 10a); the other, Zacharias Topelius the elder's publication of Finnish folk poetry (Topelius 1823: 15–18, *SKVR* I_1 63b), which contained an account of *Väinämöinen's Miscellaneous Affairs*, including the theft of the *sampo*. Apparently, the tale made no impact since Lönnrot does not mention this enigmatic entity in his dissertation on Väinämöinen, *De Väinämöine* (1991 [1827]: 11–21). Only after hearing the *sampo*-poems performed by three singers from the Viena Karelian parish of Vuokkiniemi, namely Ontrei Malinen, Arhippa Perttunen and Vaassila Kieleväinen, did the epic start to evolve around the idea of the *sampo*. (Kaukonen 1988: 100–101.)

In the process of compiling the *Kalevala*, Elias Lönnrot gradually expanded on the narrative nucleus beginning with the miniature epic *Väinämöinen* compiled in October 1833, following his interview with Ontrei Malinen that September. *Väinämöinen* was largely a poem-by-poem sequenced arrangement of songs about the mythic figure Väinämöinen, one of three such miniature epics developed by Lönnrot at that time. Already in November, Lönnrot had synthesized these into a complex and coherent epic, the so-called *Runokokous Väinämöisestä* ['A Collection of Poems about Väinämöinen'] structured on the Sampo-Cycle sung for him by Ontrei Malinen. (Setälä 1932: 43.) This second version of the epic remained unpublished as Lönnrot sought to collect additional material, and in 1835

a radically revised and expanded version of the epic appeared as the so-called *Old Kalevala*. Almost fifteen years later, the revised, reinterpreted and expanded edition of the epic was published – the so-called *New Kalevala* or the *Kalevala* as popularly known today. In the process of creating the *Kalevala* (see further Honko 1990) the myth of the *sampo* is cut off from cosmogonic themes and connected to the eventful wedding cycle describing the epic heroes' unsuccessful attempts at wooing.[1] The dramatic closure and coherence of the Viena Karelian oral Sampo-Cycle was compromised, and despite their thematic centrality in the epic, its elements were fitted where they best served the narrative sequence created by Lönnrot.

A few explanations for the *sampo* itself had already appeared before the publication of the 1849 edition of the *Kalevala*: Gottlund drew a parallel between the *sampo* and Pandora's box, Topelius claimed that the *sampo* was a musical instrument, and Matias A. Castrén interpreted the *sampo* as a talisman that produced success and happiness. Most influential of the early attempts was, however, Jacob Grimm's allegorical interpretation: like the holy Grail, the *sampo* was a talisman, but it ultimately referred to livelihoods, namely plowing, sowing, cattle breeding and spinning. (See further Kaukonen 1988: 102.) Initially, Lönnrot himself interpreted the *sampo* as an idol deriving its name from Russian *sam bog* ['God itself'] (Lönnrot 1993 [1839]: 450–451), but soon turned sceptical, admitting that "We still have no real knowledge on what kind of construction the *sampo* [...] may have been" (Lönnrot 1990 [1839]: 400). In a manuscript for the 1849 edition, he explains the *sampo* as the "luck-bringer of the soil, source of fortune," but his view gradually became more sophisticated. In his commentaries for the published version, he gives the following clarifications:

> The *sampo* had to be made of the produce of the forest, cattle and the field, and it was supposed to give a hundred times better crops itself [....] Probably the *sampo* has illustrated the modes of subsistence of those days in general. It was supposed to produce enough flour, salt, and money both to meet everyday needs and to be saved. (Kaukonen 1956: 465, SKS KiA Lönnrotiana 121, Comments 7: 187–190, 10: 226–234.)

Lönnrot returned to this line of thought in a lecture given nine years later. The idea of the *sampo* as an "illustration" of livelihoods now seemed insufficient, because "the *sampo*-myth allows and almost calls for an allegorical explanation." According to such an explanation, the *sampo* "would be characterized, or better still, conceptualized, as the civilization and culture achieved by the humanity of the time." The components of the previous interpretation were projected onto an evolutionary scheme: "In their primitive state, the native races first lived off of hunting; fishing belonged to the stage that followed thereon. Then came animal husbandry, and finally, agriculture. In this same order, the poem gives birth to the *sampo*." (Lönnrot 1991 [1859]: 492–493.) It has often been noted that this interpretation does not rest on the oral poems, but on Lönnrot's imaginative and additive manner of describing the elements that the *sampo* was produced from: each of these was supposed to stand for one stage in

the evolution of civilization (e.g. Kaukonen 1956: 465, Kaukonen 1988: 105). Even Lönnrot himself seemed to abandon his vision: in his 1877 Finnish-Swedish dictionary, he judges the *sampo* as "a still unexplained luck-producing wonder-object which brings forth prosperity by producing foodstuffs" (Lönnrot 1958 [1877]: 506).

In 1872, the fierce critic of both Lönnrot and his epic, Gottlund maintained that it is only natural for the *sampo* to escape definition: "The meaning of the word *sampo* has to remain mysterious and unexplainable [...]. Otherwise it would be no myth." As far as Gottlund was concerned, it could mean just about anything, and any further inquiry into the matter would be as futile as attempts to define the botanical species of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil or the furnishings of Noah's Ark. (Gottlund 1872: 32, n.46.) As in the battle fought in the epic universe, the popular, political and academic reception of the *Kalevala* culminated in a battle over the *sampo*: an everlasting and ultimate debate over the explanation and interpretation of the image.

It was Gottlund himself who first documented the myth of the *sampo*. In August 1817, one Maija Turpoinen from Säfsen, Dalecarlia explained to Gottlund that the old Väinämöinen and the young Jompainen had left for the North to catch the *sammas*.[2] The *sammas* however escaped, and flew to the skies. With his sword, Jompainen managed to cut off two of *sammas*'s toes – one fell in the sea, the other on land. The one that ended up in the sea made the water salty; the one that fell on land turned into growing grass. Turpoinen claimed that if there would have been more toes, the harvest would have grown without human effort. (Gottlund 1818: 10, Gottlund 1872: 33–35, *SKVR* VII_5 10, VII_5 10a.) The image of the *sampo* sketched by Turpoinen is a hybrid one. In her mind, the wealth-producing *sampo* had merged into the demonic mistress of the North who was capable of transforming herself into a bird of prey. The message of the episode can nevertheless still be identified: when the *sampo* is lost, world history enters a stage determined by the tension between wealth and want.

As described by Turpoinen, the *sammas* is obviously a bird: It can be caught and it can fly away; it has toes. The image is far from mysterious and unexplainable. One of the central strategies of Kalevala-meter poetry (or poetry in general) is to spin language and the world together with new, until then unimaginable associations and meanings. The creation of these involves the transformation of the mysterious and unexplainable into concrete images that are tangible and graphic, close to perception. At the same time, the mundane and the obvious are brought into contact with ever new images so that the habitual meanings become obscure and open to question. In this case, the mythic bird of the North no longer assails Väinämöinen and is driven off when it is struck and its toes are broken, resulting in the shattering of the *sampo*. Here, the image has been synthesized with the mysterious *sampo* itself, and the toes of the mythical bird of the North are transformed into an ideal of wealth and growth in a new imagining of the fragments of the broken *sampo.*

Imagining the sampo

The concrete nature of images – or imageries – is a factor characteristic of poetic language and its tropes. Mythic knowledge shares this poetic quality. As Anna-Leena Siikala (2002: 47–56) has pointed out, instead of abstract concepts, mythology operates with concrete and perspicuous images. Images rooted in a mythic worldview are not however spontaneous. They are determined by historical contexts and motivated in relation to religious traditions; furthermore, they are experienced as real.

The runo-singers used the poetic language to connect traditional and ancient, slowly changing elements – such as mythic images and structures (Siikala 2002) – to new interpretations often belittled as secondary "embellishments" and "fortuitous additions" (Kuusi 1994: 59). These novel interpretations include demystification and oblivion. Indeed, when the runo-collector Axel A. Borenius inquired about the meaning of the *sampo* in the parish of Paatene (in Aunus Karelia), he was dismissed abruptly: "The many-colored lid, never mind what it was."[3] In Viena Karelia the *sampo* was said to be "the mark of heaven – the stars, moons and such things",[4] a map of the world (*SKVR* I_1 123, n.15), a ship (*SKVR* I_1 61, n.24), a windmill (*SKVR* I_1 58a, n.29), a mill (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 56:b)18618) or a mill stone (*SKVR* I_1 64), "a bountiful being with all kinds of goodness inside"[5] and a *kantele* – a vernacular harp-like instrument (*SKVR* I_1 4a, 206). Explicit interpretations were added for the folklore collector, but in the poems, the idea was veiled in poetic expression with its parallelistic elaborations, giving birth to an ambiguous and multifaceted image. Through its epithets or parallel designations, the *sampo* was depicted as a container with a many-coloured lid, handles, and roots; occasionally as the sky (*SKVR* I_1 97, 164–167), a colorful sleigh (*kirjakorja*) (*SKVR* I_1 62, 181), a flying vehicle (*SKVR* I_1 13, 118), or an oak tree (*SKVR* I_1 75, 73). The narrative reveals that it is man-made (produced by a smith by hammering) and that it divides humanity into those who have and those who have not: the *sampo* produces wealth, and the fate of the *sampo* explains wealth's uneven distribution. As Matti Kuusi (1994: 55) has noted, the only unquestioned quality of the vernacular *sampo* is that it is something good.

In his massive study on the enigma of the *sampo*, linguist Emil N. Setälä argues that the runo-singers did not "know" what the *sampo* was: they were unacquainted with the platonic idea of the *sampo*, and tried, with the help of their imagination, to create "images of some kind". However, according to Setälä, these images lacked an inner logic and failed to capture the essential idea. (Setälä 1932: 18, 26, 191.) Kuusi was ready to admit that "the *sampo* is a riddle in which everyone has the right to reflect his or her own imagination." Neither Setälä nor Kuusi granted this freedom to scholars who were destined to search for the ultimate and original meaning – if they wished to avoid being accused of taking poetic license. (Kuusi 1994: 53, Setälä 1932: 20.) Despite the bias in favor of knowledge and reason and against creative interpretation, the issue of the imaginative was clearly articulated. The suspicion regarding the imaginative clearly indicates two strands of thought: the equation of the meaning of a symbol to

one supposedly original meaning (e.g. Setälä 1932: 25–26), and the implicit understanding of imagination as the human faculty of "grasping objects through their images, shadows, and reflections" (Johnson 1987: 142). As Mark Johnson (1987: 141–145) has noted, the latter tradition, traceable to Plato's philosophy, opposes imagination to knowledge and rationality, and restricts the former to the domain of art.

As a point of departure, this essay takes Johnson's broad definition of imagination as the human "capacity to organize mental representations (especially percepts, images and image schemata) into meaningful, coherent unities." Imagination is not restricted to art, nor is it limited to the faculty of forming images in the mind, or connecting perception (or sensation) to reason and understanding. (Johnson 1987: 140–141.) For Johnson (ibid. 169), imagination is essential to "human rationality":

> Imagination is a pervasive structuring activity by means of which we achieve coherent, patterned, unified representations. It is indispensable for our ability to make sense of our experience, to find it meaningful. [....] Imagination is absolutely central to human rationality, that is, to our rational capacity to find significant connections, to draw inferences, and to solve problems. (Johnson 1987: 168.)

In the analysis of oral poetry and its imagery, a broad understanding of imagination is compatible with the following premises. The tropes and images in poetic language are not superfluous aesthetic style; rather they point at the ways in which people create order and meaning in their world. Interpretations change over time, and their validity is not related to any original meaning. In this analysis, it is not decisive whether the poetic corpus under scrutiny is mythological: imagination has the capacity connect the mythic and "believed-in imaginings" (de Riviera & Sarbin 1998) to the domains of everyday thinking and play. According to William Doty (1986: 15), the imaginal nature of myths connects them to other "imaginal expressions and stories" that are "the embodiments in which interpretations are applied schematically to experienced reality," but their paramount cultural importance sets them apart from other ways of inventing meaning. As Doty and Siikala argue, mythic imagination or images are "true experientially," (Doty 1986: 15) or, in the case of incantations, "considered and experienced as real" (Siikala 2002: 52). Mythic images in poetic language are shared, historically layered, and connected to slowly changing mental models; furthermore, their meaning is based on a referential relation to the mythical world and can only be understood against the belief tradition (Siikala 2002: 29–32, 49). The specific representations brought into being and organized in vernacular imagination need not be coherent and unified, although variation and individual innovation – the supposedly free imagination – is patterned according to established "image-schematic structures" (Johnson 1987: 169) that guide the creation of novel connections between images. In mythic corpuses, the coherence of images and image-frames is context specific. They make sense, but their meaning in one context cannot be imposed on

other contexts. The meaning of the *sampo* in vernacular imagination is thus multiply motivated, but not reducible to any one dominant frame.

To underline the role of the collective and the traditional in imaginative processes (Petterson 2002), the enigma of the *sampo* will be approached through the concept of vernacular imagination. Within the frame of vernacular imagination, mythic images such as the *sampo*, are powerful loci of memory and action. They are made possible by tradition, and moulded by it; they affect the ways in which individuals and communities act, and are constantly altered by these actions. In order to be communicated and encoded in language, imagination has to be related to conventions of expression. Our ability and inclination to create mental images independent of immediate sensory perception, and to combine them into an imaginative world is bound to our culture and language, but free form constant reality checks. Within this interpretive matrix, the *sampo* is more than an outcome of imaginative processes: it emerges as an image of imagination itself.

The *sampo* of the folk poems is a symbol that absorbed and reflected images acute in the cultural context and individual mind. In the following, descriptions and narratives related to the *sampo* in Viena Karelia during the one-hundred-period 1821–1921 will be analyzed with special emphasis on the parish of Vuokkiniemi.[6] Within this community, imagining the *sampo* was both articulate and ritually orchestrated. It took shape in verbal expression, action and visual imagery. As a symbol, the *sampo* was enriched by several historical layers, and its interpretations varied according to genre and individual. Instead of looking for one single explanation, I will try to portray the *sampo* myth as the people's means of understanding their universe and coping with its challenges – as an instrument for "'having a world' that we can make sense of" (Johnson 1987: 140). The most important informants come from the village and family of Ontrei Malinen, the very singer who gave Lönnrot the impetus to use the Sampo-Cycle as a backbone to his literary epic.

The Beginning of the World

The key components of the Viena Karelian Sampo-Cycle – *The Song of Creation*, *The Forging of the Sampo*, and *The Theft of the Sampo* – recount the events leading up to the creation of the cosmos and of the central means of subsistence, in addition to explaining the origins of scarcity. The Vuokkiniemi corpus shows that this cycle of mythic poems was interpreted as a narrative about "the beginning of the world" (*SKVR* I_1 91, n.21). The watery void was shaped into a social cosmos inhabited by humans, sheltered by the vault of the sky, and illuminated by the heavenly bodies. The poems tell us that the battle over the *sampo* – the symbol of infinite bounty – broke out after the creation of the world. The ensuing discord and the ultimate destruction of the *sampo* brought the world to its present state defined by scarcity. *The Song of Creation* links the narratives combined with it to the mythic deeds carried out at the beginning of time.

The link to cosmogony enhances the expressive and even explanatory

power of the *sampo* myth. Furthermore, the link between the Sampo-Cycle and *The Song of Creation* validates the association between the *sampo* and the whole universe. Forged at the world's creation, the *sampo* contained "all the goodness of the world, the moon and the light of day, and the darling sun".[7] In terms of plot structure, the analogy drawn between the *sampo* and the universe is based on a mythic model: creation takes place due to the destruction and division of the primeval substances into scattered fragments; the demiurge uses his skills to forge the world and its parts into an ordered whole, a cosmos. Both the proto-egg of *The Song of Creation* and the *sampo* contain all possible matter.[8] The great sage (*tietäjä*) Ohvo Homanen from the Malinen family depicts Väinämöinen in the act of fashioning the world out of the shattered egg:

Ite nuin sanoikse virkki:	He himself put it into words:
"Mi munassa ruskieta,	"Let the egg yolk
se päiväkse paistamaha.	be the shining sun.
Mi munassa valkijeta,	Let the egg white
se kuukse kumottamaha.	be the shimmering moon.
Murskaha muna muruikse	Let the shattered egg
taivosella tähtysikse."	become the stars in the sky."
(*SKVR* I_1 83a, 44–50.)	

Having created the world, Väinämöinen drifts to the otherworldly North. As a ransom for his release, Väinämöinen makes a promise to send the mythic smith Ilmarinen to the North: only he is able to forge the *sampo*. When Ilmarinen has accomplished the task, and the *sampo* is in operation, Väinämöinen's people set off to steal it. A battle ensues and the *sampo* falls into the sea. At the conclusion of Homanen's version, Ilmarinen or Väinämöinen divide up the pieces of the *sampo* that have fallen into the sea, an act recalling the division of the contents of the world-egg from the beginning of the poem:

"Meilä kyntö, meilä kylvö,	"Ours is the plowing, ours is the sowing,
meilä kuu on, meilä päivä,	ours is the moon, ours is the light of day,
meilä armas aurinkoinen,	ours is the darling sun,
meilä tähet taivahalla!"	ours the stars in the sky!"
(*SKVR* I_1 83a, 240–244.)	

The lines lend further emphasis to the ritual repetition of the world's creation described in the poem and the cosmographic interpretation of the *sampo*. The reflection of the disintegration of the world-egg in the image of the *sampo* stresses the wide scope of its potential meanings. The fusion of the *sampo* and the birth of the cosmos provide a crystallized symbol for explaining and evaluating the present state of the world. Desired outcomes – for example, abundant crops and good catches – and the cycles determining the various means of subsistence occupy a central place in any mythological corpus. Indeed, the meaning and meaningfulness of the Sampo-Cycle was

related to the origin of agriculture, as stated by Vaassilei Malinen, the son of the famous singer Ontrei: "You see, it was just the beginning of the world, when they got started with plowing and sowing".[9] The beginning of the world was in an analogical relationship with the beginning of each and every mode of subsistence, with time being created anew at the beginning of every subsistence year (Eliade 1974: 49–92, Honko 1979). Simultaneously, that which was created at the beginning of time – the necessities and structures that determined the whole of human existence – was constructed over and over again.

Banishing the Frost

The versions of the Sampo-Cycle recorded from the Malinens most clearly articulate the bond between the beginning of the world and present-day reality. The final episodes of these poems underline the consequences of the shattering of the *sampo*. According to Iivana Malinen, Ontrei's grandson, the Sampo-Cycle was sung during spring and fall sowing rituals after the recitation of the sowing incantation. The cycle closes with a description of "how Väinämöinen eliminated the frost sent by the Mistress of the North" (*SKVR* I_1 88b). This conclusion of the cycle links the accounts of the creation in *The Song of Creation* and *The Forging of the Sampo* to the ritual performance of the text: the ritual practice is justified by a poetic account of the first successful banishment of frost (Haavio 1991: 171–173, Kuusi 1949: 145–146).

Nevertheless, reciting the sacred words did not always yield the most desirable outcome. The singers' prose commentaries indicate the relative impoverishment of the land in the wake of the battle. Väinämöinen failed to bring unlimited prosperity to his people:

> Kun olis' moalla torattu niin olis' moan peällä eläjät pohatammat, mutta kun se mäńi mereh, niin se on rikkahamp'. (*SKVR* I_4 2133.)
>
> If they would've quarreled on land, the land would've had wealthier dwellers, but because it went to the sea, the sea is richer.

> Siitä se levisi sampo šiihi, mäni meren pohjah suurin osa; kuin ois moalla peässyt, niin ois ollut vaikka kuinka rikaš moa kunta. (*SKVR* I_1 61.)
>
> The *sampo* spread itself there, most of it went to the bottom of the sea; if it had reached the shore, then the inland would have been ever so rich.

At the close of the Sampo-Cycle, Väinämöinen and the Mistress of the North engage in a dialogue dramatizing the birth of scarcity. In everyday life, the ongoing struggle for wealth, the fight to survive, was conceptualized through the notions of envy and "ruining", the magical manipulation of a neighbor's luck (see below). The origin myth about scarcity explains the less bountiful world of the present by linking it to the conflict between

"us", the communal ego, and "them", the neighbors in the otherworld. Like the manipulation of envy and luck in magic, the conflict assumes a verbal form. The concluding episode of the poem culminates in a dialogue cast in incantations. Blessings to protect one's own sowing are answered by the neighbor's spells to ruin (i.e. harm magically) the field:

Sano vanha Väinämöinen:
"Ohoh Pohjolan emäntä,
läkkäämäs jaolle sammon,
kirjokannen katsantaan
nenääh utusen niemen!"
Sano Pohjolan emäntä:
"En lähe jaolle sammon,
kirjokannen katsantaan."
Siitä vanha Väinämöinen
seulo seulalla utua,
terheniä tepsutteli.
Itse nuin sanoiksi virkko:
"Tänne kyntö, tänne kylvö,
tänne vilja kaikenlainen
poloiselle Pohjan maalle,
Suomen suurille tiloille.
Tänne kuut, tänne päivät!"
Sano Pohjolan emäntä:
"Vielä mä tuohon mutkan muistan,
keksin kummoa vähäisen
sinun kynnön, kylvön pääle.
Soan rautasen rakehen,
teräksisen tellittelen
halmettasi hakkaamahan,
pieksämään peltojasi!"
Sano vanha Väinämöinen:
"Satoos rautaista raetta,
teräksistä tellittellös
Pohjolan kujan perille,
saviharjan hartiolle!"
(*SKVR* I$_1$ 79a, 337–366.)[10]

Said old Väinämöinen:
"Hey, Mistress of the North,
let us go and share the *sampo*,
to survey the many-colored lid
at the tip of the misty cape!"
Said the Mistress of the North:
"I won't share the *sampo*,
or survey the many-colored lid."
Then old Väinämöinen
sifted some mist with a sieve,
sprinkled some fog.
He himself put it into words:
"Here the plowing, here the sowing,
here the grain of all kinds
to the poor lands of the North,
to the great farms of Finland.
Here the moons, here the suns!"
Said the mistress of the North:
"I'll remember one more trick,
I'll devise another puzzle
over your plowing and sowing;
I shall send the hails of iron,
throw the steely ones
to beat your land sown with grain,
to batter your fields!"
Said old Väinämöinen:
"Let the hails of iron rain,
the steely ones fall
upon the ends of the alley of the North,
on the shoulder of the clay hill!"

In terms of rhetorical function, Väinämöinen's blessings (lines 349–354) and curses (lines 363–366) match the actual sowing incantations used in sowing rituals. The connection however remains allusive: unlike in many Kalevala-meter epic poems, there is no incantation proper embedded within the epic poem. (Tarkka 2005: 70–71, 136–138.) Such explicitness would have been unnecessary because sowing words were performed as a prologue to the performance of the epic poem and thus set within the same ritual continuum – within the limits of one single multigeneric text, as it were (Tarkka forthcoming b).

Typical features in actual plowing and sowing incantations include words

for ruining others' fields, short spells for favorable weather and pleas for ample growth.[11] For example, the Malinen family, before commencing the work of sowing, recited sowing words three times while making the sign of the cross:[12]

Akka manteren alaini,	Old wife under the ground,
poika pellon pohjimmaińi,	son at the base of the field
ei moa väkie puutu,	the land lacks no force,
pelto ei perintöö väheksi.	the field does not belittle its birthright.
Saoin hoaroin hoarattele,	Branch out the branches by the hundreds
tuhansin neniä nossa	lift the tips by the thousands
kylvöstäni, kynnöstäńi,	from my sowing, from my plowing,
varsin vaivani nävöstä,	from my very labors,
ylitse katehen mielen,	over the envious minds,
hyvänsuovan mieltä myöten,	for the kindly minds
pahansuovan päitse mielen!	against the maligning minds!
(*SKVR* I_4 1743.)	

Greeting the land and the short exhortative expressions that situate the desired growth "here" connect farming incantations to the interpretations of the *sampo* as the ultimate growing thing, a vital force in the abstract or simply a growing field. The "growth of all kinds" (*kasvu kaikenlaini*), "grain of all kinds" (*vilja kaikenlainen*) and "harvest of all kinds" (*asu kaiken lainen*) contained in or produced by the *sampo* was typically referred to with an alliterative formulaic line that paraphrases the produce of the field by referring to human agency: at stake is the "plowing" and "sowing" that belongs to a designated agent and is located "there" or "here".[13] Farming incantations make use of the same formula, when the plowman asks the guardian spirit to bring the growth to "my sowing, my plowing" (*kylvöhöni, kyntöhöni*) (I_4 1745, 21.) Ilmarinen's words – "ours is the plowing, ours the sowing, ours is the moon, ours the daylight"[14] – correspond to the ritual greeting performed when preparing new ground for slash and burn cultivation:

Terve maa on, terve mantu,	Hail the earth, hail the ground,
terve kuu on, terve päivä,	hail the moon, hail the sun,
terve tervehyttäjäinen!	hail the bringer of health!
(*SKVR* I_4 1738, 7–9.)	

In both the Sampo-Cycle and in the sower's incantation, the significance of scattering the seed expands from the field to comprise the vault of the sky, thus becoming a cosmogonic act. One thing in particular binds the dialogue of incantations in the Sampo-Cycle to folk belief: in both, the Mistress of the North augurs and personifies the north wind and the frost.[15] A singer from the village of Jyskyjärvi was convinced that both frost and north winds were caused by the malevolence of the Mistress of the North, who had severed the lid of the *sampo* (*SKVR* I_1 14). The arrival of the Mistress signals the end of the growing season and the beginning of the harvest. Harvest incantations illustrate the menace:

Panen kylvöni kokohon,
kasvukseni tukkupäille
jaloistap' on
Pohjolan emännän.
(*SKVR* I_4 1763.)

I gather my sown ones,
I heap my grown ones
from the [trampling] feet
of the Mistress of the North.

The alternation of abundance and scarcity – the latter epitomized by frost or hailstones – can be interpreted within two contexts of agricultural magic. On the one hand, the seasonal changes bring forth alternating periods of growth and non-growth, which requires the periodical renewal of the soil's fertility. According to traditional logic, the "good security" (*hyvä turva*) (*SKVR* I_1 51, 11) provided by the *sampo* constantly had to be renewed: the *sampo* prepared by Ilmarinen was inherently "new" (*SKVR* I_1 54, e.g. 201). The ritual context suggests that the plot of the Sampo-Cycle represents the annual retrieval of the symbol of fertility from the otherworld: the "sowing," "plowing", and "grains of all kinds" within the *sampo* are collected from the "dark North" (*SKVR* I_1 79, 194–200). Conveying the symbol spatially from *there* to *here* corresponds to the passage of time in the growing season.

Another battle between fecundity and barrenness was thus played out on a spatial plane. Obviously the distinction between the cardinal points projects the previously mentioned passing of the seasons onto spatial entities, the North and the South, the largest parts of the *sampo* having drifted to the latter (*SKVR* I_1 60, 178). Furthermore, the spatial differentiation took place through the demarcation of fertile and infertile land. This distinction was continually reproduced in various ways: by occupying new land for farming, by magically manipulating the neighboring farmer's land and by safeguarding one's own plowing, sowing, and luck (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 55:b)18337). The abundance of the land, which was crystallized in the *sampo*, had to be brought *here* and to *us*, to "our own lands" (*SKVR* I_1 84b, 211½). The ritual manipulation of time and space ensured the growth and fertility of the fields. Good fortune was maximized by juxtaposing one's own lot and farmland with the temporal and spatial dimensions of the otherworld – the time before time and the cold, dark field of the North.

According to Lönnrot, "a certain old singer," presumed to be Ontrei Malinen, regarded the *sampo* as arable land: "I reckon it means all the land"[16] – otherwise it would make no sense to say that it contained the plowing, sowing, growth and "eternal luck" (Lönnrot 1991 [1839]: 491–492). The theft of the *sampo* and its division are thus also motivated by the limited amount of arable land and the recurrent division of land that – because of the *mir*-institution and the prohibition against slash-and-burn agriculture[17] – made the farmer's life one of constant aggravation. In the summer of 1834, Ontrei Malinen himself was forced to leave his frost-sensitive lands for a place ten kilometers away from the main village of Vuonninen. The new house established in Haapakuotkue was passed on from Ontrei to Jyrki, for the elder son, Vaassilei, had already settled in a new house. (Tarkka 2005: 168.) In the 1860s, when Jyrki's son Jeremie was eighteen, the house of Haapakuotkue was divided up and Jeremie cleared land for a house in Pissonsuu: "I come from poor resources. The house was divided into

three, we were three brothers. Our family had only three cows" (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 64:b)22377). If indeed the head of the Malinen house, the old Ontrei understood the *sampo* as a metaphor for the land, its shattering into pieces meant fragmentation of the land used by the community – or the kin. The family history of privation formed the interpretive matrix for the Malinens' construal of the *sampo* within the agricultural cycle of frost, land clearing and land division. Divided resources did not proliferate; everybody was a loser.

The Limits of Goods and of Goodness

The *sampo*'s significance is not construed as a referential relationship that is clear-cut and unidirectional, but rather as a complex of symbolic relations within an interpretive framework assessing the nature, source and distribution of wealth and growth. The people of Vuokkiniemi did not limit the image of the *sampo* to the grain field and the vault of the sky, for the *sampo* was explicitly connected to "growth" and "grain" "of all kinds" – including in the contexts of hunting, cattle husbandry, fishing, and commerce. In Karelian, most terms for wealth or luck refer to a certain means of subsistence or sphere of life, but they also connote general affluence and well-being, crystallized in terms such as "grain" (*vilja*), "harvest" (*elo*, *asu*), "growth" (*kasvu*), "lot" (*osa*), "share" (*kohtalo*) or "luck" (*lykky*), "money" (*raha*), "value" (*arvo*), and "good(ness)" (*hyvyys*). This heterogeneous totality of value, abundance, and well-being is embodied in the concrete image of the *sampo*, the "good security" (*SKVR* I_1 51, 11).

Although the "grain" that the Malinens associated with the *sampo* stressed the plowing and sowing related to harvesting crops, the term also refers conceptually to the catch of hunters and fishermen, as well as to livestock.[18] According to Jeremie Malinen, the *sampo* actually produced a valuable catch for the hunter: the *sampo*-mill "ground pine martens".[19] "The one with a hundred horns" (*sata sarvi*), an epithet for the *sampo* employed by Ontrei Malinen (*SKVR* I_1 79, e.g. 213) is a metonymic image of cattle. It figured prominently in milking incantations: milk is beckoned from the neighboring farm, which, with its locked gates, is likened to the inaccessible and mythic North (*SKVR* I_4 1547, 8). Thus within this one family's tradition, the *sampo* carried associations with diverse forms of livelihood. Whereas Lönnrot's allegorical interpretation of the *sampo* reduced the many facets of the symbol to a supposedly universal historical succession of modes of subsistence, the Vuokkiniemi *sampo* absorbs all of them into one dynamic whole: it is a core symbol of mixed economy (Tarkka 1990: 301).

The idea of organic growth associated with the *sampo* is highlighted in the motif describing the roots of the *sampo*: in accordance with the traditional formula describing fertilization, the *sampo* "thence swelled, thence filled with it, thence took root".[20] Even the basic ingredients of the *sampo* emphasize fertility and vitality. As a living thing, the *sampo* is forged either out of ingredients suggestive of barrenness and meagerness (for example, milk from a barren cow) or barley grains used to symbolize

fecundity, growth, and abundant game (*SKVR* I_1 54, 153–157, I_1 97, 82). Furthermore, the ambiguity of the ingredients is captured with the stylistic device of adynaton: the *sampo* is made of impossibly little, of next to nothing (Haavio 1956: 12–15 cf. Kuusi 1961: 205–207). The scant and/or contradictory ingredients are aptly crystallized in the *sampo* as a symbol of potential growth and infinite transformation. The *sampo* encapsulates both the impossibility of unlimited abundance and the prospect of growth – that is, the transformation made possible by the fusion of the symbol's opposing poles.

The Sampo-Cycle is also associated with the mythic images linked to fishing and the sea. Farmers made vulnerable by the hazards of northern agriculture cherished the image of the *sampo* whose shattered remains had filled the sea with fish. The motif has been interpreted as an origin myth for the livelihood of fishing (Haavio 1991: 171–173): it explains the superior wealth of the sea and why fishing is a more reliable than farming. The fishing grounds created in *The Song of Creation* are filled with catch when the *sampo*'s riches are "poured" into the sea (*SKVR* I_1 73, 66). Many of the related proverbs and moral judgments formulated at the close of *The Theft of the Sampo* also highlight the wealth of the sea:

> Muu kaikki mäni mereh, siitä merell onki paras hyvys, sill on kalat ja hylkehet, kaikki sillä on. – Kaikki sammossa oli ennen mitä meressä on elävätä. (*SKVR* I_1 83a, n.26.)
>
> Everything else went to the sea, and that's why the sea has the most goodness: it contains the fish, the seals, and everything. Long ago the *sampo* contained every living sea creature.

> Riieltih, riieltih; V. olis tahton šammon moalla, ńi šillä olis moa tullun jos kuin elośa; vain kuin šoatettih mereh, ńiin šillä on meri pohatta; šiinä on kaiken-nävöistä eluo, simtukkoa ta muuta. Šampo oli eläjä pohatta, šiinä oli šeämeššä kaiken-näköni hyvyš. (*SKVR* I_1 649.)
>
> They quarreled and quarreled. Väinämöinen wanted to keep the *sampo* on land, for it would have increased the harvest of the land; but when it was carried out to sea, the sea was made wealthy; it now has all manner of harvest, pearl mussels and what not. The *sampo* was a wealthy being with all kinds of goodness inside.

> Šillä šormella šyyt'i heäm mereh kaiken hyvyön, mitä parasta taisi olla. Šiitä meri tuli rikkahakši. Šill' on enämmän tavaroa kuim moalla. Vanha Väinämöińi ei šoanun kuin kynnön ja kylvöñ ja kašvun kaikellaiseñ tänne. (*SKVR* I_1 84, n.56.)
>
> With that finger of hers she [the Mistress of the North] poured all the goodness and all the best things into the sea. Thereafter the sea became rich. It has more goods than the land. Old Väinämöinen only managed to bring us the plowing, the sowing, and the growth of all kinds.

Vejell' on avara aitta.
Se on vesi rikas vilĺasta, kun on sammo mereh soanun. (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 32:c)12598–12599. 1915.)

The water has a vast storehouse.
The water has the richest crops because the sammo has gone to the sea.

Kaikki vuoatti merehen;	Everything seeped into the sea;
maa köyhä, meri pohatta.	the land [is] poor, the sea wealthy.
(*SKVR* I_1 647, 267–268.)	

The wealth of the waters hints beyond the ethnographic reality of local subsistence fishing. The terms "wealthy" (*pohatta*), "rich" (*rikaš*), and "more goods" (*enämmän tavaroa*) bespeak a relation to a cash economy, thus also connecting the mythic notions of abundance to the commercial fishing trade that attracted impoverished Viena Karelians to the coast of the Arctic Ocean (Tarkka 2005: 18, 170–172).

The poem often ends with a myth explaining why seawater is salty: "It remained grinding in the sea forever, there in the White Sea; last it ground salt, and there it is, grinding salt in the sea. One cannot drink the water, the sea is so salty."[21] According to A. J. Sjögren, the local people believed the *sampo* to be "a stone that Väinämöinen had dropped into the sea that ground everything necessary, both salt and grain" (*SKVR* I_1 64). Salt was one of the most important commodities to be bought and thus a significant link binding the local community to cash economy. The identification of the *sampo* with the production of the quantity of salt in the sea is therefore consistent with its other realizations of its economically relevant productivity. The *sampo* not only ground things to eat: all that it produced during daytime was said to be for selling (*SKVR* I_4 2134, 214–215, see further Tarkka 1990: 277–278).

Although the inherent tension between scarcity and abundance does not exhaust the meanings of the *sampo* myth, it does motivate it in the context of the everyday reality of the singers. As expressions of mythic history, the poems, which were anchored in an archaic belief system, continued to evoke significance in everyday life because of the ensuing necessity to make do with scant resources. During frost years, entire villages fled "to the thicker places of the sea shores" (SKS KRA. Marttinen E 71: 2613, 3–4). These circumstances gave rise to countless narratives about "the profusion of fat fish in the Arctic Ocean." Northern coastal towns paid well for catches of fish, and the fishermen enjoyed "merry days of plenty" (Vilkuna 1927: 197). Imagined as the mythical reserve of game, the wealthy region soon acquired the traditional attribute for prosperity and well-being, "thick" (*paksu*). Correspondingly, the villagers were able to localize the mythic North in an actual but remote place beyond their normal sphere of life.[22] Meanings were conferred to economic conditions and subsistence landscapes in two ways: first, by mythologizing actual subsistence landscapes, and second, by familiarizing mythic features of the otherworld. Anni Lehtonen's interpretation of the *sampo*'s wealth, the

North, and the shores of the Arctic Ocean also evolve from this mythic geography:

> Se on Jeämeren takana. Sieltä se on tännekin rikkaus soatu. Jos olis kaikki soatu, niin olisi rikas moa. Se mylly mi jauhoa kaikki, ei imehnisten tarvitse tehä niin mitänä. Mutta kun se mäni mereh, yksi kivi vain soatih. Sillä se on meri rikas, kun se on veteh soatettu toratessah. Ei ole siellä muita käynyt, kun vanha Väinämöini, joka toi sen sammon. (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 56:b)18618.)

> It's beyond the Arctic Ocean. The riches were brought here from over there. If everything had been brought here, the land would be rich. The mill grinds everything; people don't have to do a thing. But when it went to the sea, only one stone could be kept. That is why the sea is rich, because the water is where it ended up in the quarreling. Nobody else has been there but old Väinämöini, who brought with him that *sampo*.

As the symbol of wealth and resources, the *sampo* can be examined as an expression of what George Foster has termed "the Image of Limited Good". In Foster's view, peasant societies were determined by scarcity, with only a limited amount of material and non-material resources. (Foster 1965: 296–297.) These resources could be divided and re-divided, but they never increased in their entirety. One neighbor's gain invariably resulted in another neighbor's loss. Therefore the principle of limited good is firmly linked to the social, symbolic, and magical manifestations of envy. (Foster 1965: 302, 1972: 175–177, Haavio 1955: 454–456.) Based on the notion of the closed economic system of the village, Foster's formulation of the principle of limited good has received its share of criticism (e.g. Gregory 1975: 73–74, Piker 1966, Kennedy 1966). Foster himself expressed some reservations about the constraints on economic growth and the limited nature of abundance, for there are no totally closed economic systems, even if the natural environment with its available resources sets the limits for prosperity (Foster 1965: 305–306).

In the case of Viena Karelia, the livelihood structure was complex and remarkably open. Before the prohibition on slash-and-burn agriculture, it was possible to increase the amount of arable land. This exploitation of the natural resources was extensive – in the eyes of those living on the Finnish side of the border, even reckless (Tarkka 2005: 333). The efforts made by locals to get ahead by trading with outsiders did not imperil the equilibrium of finite wealth, because they failed to profit at the expense of other members of the local community. In the mixed economy of Viena, individuals often sought additional income by leaving the village. In fact, the money to be earned from itinerant trading, begging, working seasonally for wages in towns, stealing animals from Finnish herders, smuggling liquor, as well as logging, railway work and working for coastal fishing companies was economically more significant than farming. (Tarkka 2005: 18–19.)

With its infinite potential for growth and viability, the *sampo* initially symbolizes the utopian condition of *un*limited good (see also Anttonen

2000: 187 and Anttonen, this volume). In a world defined by scarcity and want, the *sampo* emerges as the ultimate fantasy (cf. Hakamies, this volume), for it is produced from practically nothing – from scratch and "even half of it, still even half of the half" (*Puolešta šitäki vielä, vielä puolešta šitäki*) (*SKVR* I_1 93, 69–70). As the Sampo-Cycle testifies, the first attempt to divide up this symbol of "goodness" and of "goods" (*SKVR* I_1 84) is followed by the establishment of limits. Thus in *The Theft of the Sampo* and in the ritual enactment of the Sampo-Cycle, the *sampo* already symbolizes the totality of a limited amount of good, which can be ritually divided over and over again. The public nature of the negotiation, the mythic representation of the dramatic division, and the magical ruining described in the epic is starkly contrasted with analogous vernacular magical practices associated with protecting or ruining crops and other aspects of livelihood that are secretive and hidden from the public view.

In the *sampo* myth, the contradiction between scarcity and abundance could be conceptually resolved by construing the otherworld as the birthplace of abundance and potential for growth. Even though the phenomenal world of the farmer was characterized by scarcity and poverty, the mythic imagination construed affluence elsewhere, in a world alien and otherworldly. Thus, affluence was accessible through exchange with the inhabitants of the otherworld, and thereby the notion of the otherworld provides an ideological solution to the limits of the economic system and the unreliability of harvests. It was possible to maintain an economy symbolically open to the boundless wealth of the otherworld. The apparent limitlessness of organic growth and birth from nothing – *ex nihilo* – could be dealt with and resolved through the image of the otherworld. Thus the *sampo*, a symbol of proliferation, was repeatedly retrieved from the otherworld. Through negotiation with otherworldly agents, barrenness is transformed into growth and abundance. A harvest, like beingness, can neither come from nothing nor cease to exist. Mythic imagination moulds abstract ideas into concrete images, and thus emergence and decomposition are pictured as the movement of entities from one locale to another, or as hammering or shattering a concrete, man-made object.[23]

Regardless of ontological assumptions about the existence of the otherworld, the unceasing exchange that was taking place between this world and the otherworld ultimately served to blur the borders of the symbolic community. Within a mindset that relied on negotiation with otherworldly agents within ritual discourse (Siikala 2002, Stark 2002: 39–42, Tarkka 2005: 87, 328–329), the appropriation of the otherworldly resources was a plausible strategy. Within the ideology of limited good and envy, the good possessed by others had to be usurped with magic means because of its limited quantity. These others include the more affluent neighbors and the otherworld whose bounty is accessible through ritual means. Rituals provided an avenue for renewing the myth of the first division of goods, enabling each and every one to maximize his share.

The myth of the birth of scarcity evinces the positive value attributed to the otherworld, for this realm represented paradisiacal wealth and liberation from the privations of this life. In real life, the lot and luck encapsulated in

the image of the *sampo* required constant ritual attention. The amount of luck designated to each human being – that is, his or her lot in life – could only be obtained from the totality of luck created at the beginning of the world.[24] Ritual afforded people the opportunity for immediate union with a site able to generate positive value.

Goodness, Plenty and Ethics

Obtaining the *sampo* from the North "on one's own authority" (*omin lupisin*) (*SKVR* I_1 79, 247) is consonant with an international mythological model whereby good/ness is pursued for human benefit; dubbed by Martti Haavio as "the pattern of theft", this sought-after goodness could only be achieved by the treachery of the demiurge (Haavio 1967: 205). In the oral poems, the heroes make no effort to justify their venture, and admit that they are, in fact, "stealing the *sampo*" (*SKVR* I_1 410, 75). The moral of the heroes' venture is ambiguous. In addition to the emphasis on betrayal and theft, *The Theft of the Sampo* contains, however, numerous references to the protagonists' attempts at division and negotiation: "Let's share the *sampo*"; "Let's share the harvest!"[25] There are no winners in the "quarrel" (*tora*) and "fight" (*tappelu*) or "war" (*sota*): "Not for you, not for me, let the *sampo* be in the sea!"[26]

The images of boundless good associated with the *sampo* linked the utopian and fantastic interpretations of the symbol to ethical issues such as the legitimacy of ownership and the uneven distribution of wealth. This is most evident in the treatment of the image of the *sampo* as a wonder-mill that grinds salt without ceasing: "Väinämöini went to the dark North to fetch the *sammo*. It has been a grinding stone of sorts. It has ground like a grinding stone, a millstone."[27] The same miraculous mill was a popular topic in folktales and prose legends. In the logic of folktales, however, only righteous deeds produced wealth in abundance. *The Magic Mill* (ATU 565) chronicles a poor brother's way to riches by acquiring the devil's money-grinding stone. While voyaging at sea, the young man leaves the stone to grind salt into a porridge pot and the ship sinks because of the overwhelming produce – the sea becomes salty but the mill is lost forever. (SKS KRA. Marttinen 7:a)51a.) A similar miraculous mill and other wealth-generating objects are inherited in the folktale *The Three Lucky Brothers*. The protagonist acquires game from the forest with the help of a musical instrument or *kantele*; he trades the millstone for a monetary treasure and a fishing reel for a water spirit's promise of a good catch ("goodness"). The inheritance associated with various subsistence modes was a shared value beneficial to all: "In this way everybody profited." (SKS KRA. Marttinen, N. a)13; ATU 1650.)

The alluring theme of the division of wealth defies the boundaries between poetry and prose – as is evident in the poem *The Boy of Luck* and its prose version, the religious tale *How the World Got Rich*. The hero of the poem personifies luck. In this Christian framework, "the boy of lots, boy of luck, the money-full son of God" simply unloads his sleigh filled with game and all kinds of goods at the house whose inhabitants greet him mercifully.[28]

In the prose version, "the boy of luck" from the poem is interpreted as the Son of God walking through this world; and the girl who treats him well is showered with riches:

> Heän heitti sillä tytöllä ńiin suuren rikkahuon, heän kun kasvo ńi hänellä aina onnesti joka paikassa ta heän tuli ńiir rikkahakse jotta heän, alko kaikkie toiśie rikassuttoa ta siitä alko moailma rikastuo ta nyt se oj jo näir rikas! No, siitä se on, rikkahus om muka sieltä tullun. (Virtaranta 1971: 161.)
>
> He threw the girl such an abundance of riches so that when she grew up she always succeeded in everything and she became so rich that she started to make everyone else rich too, and so the world began to get rich and now it is already this rich. Well, that's how it all started, that's where riches come from, they say.

The religious tales recount how Jesus increased the wealth of the entire world and distributed it among the righteous. Although the Christian origin myth of riches inverts the myth of the birth of scarcity, its fantasies are comprised of the same images of infinite good and it negotiates the same moral dilemmas as the Sampo-Cycle. Yet the visions of boundless good in the folktales contrast sharply with the Sampo-Cycle's conclusion, a portrayal of the human condition as defined by want. As Kaarle Krohn (1903: 189) put it, the myth of the *sampo* reflects the harsh reality of the common people: "Here, full and complete happiness is unattainable."

The implicit ethical negotiation concerning the contractual nature of the forging of the *sampo*, its theft and the failure to divide it up challenges the self-serving aims of magic motivated by envy. The aims of magic used to maximize and defend one's own good fortune were aggressive and selfish. The ethical stance of the Karelian villager exhibits a canny acknowledgement of the destructive power of envy, particularly to the envier himself. As in the bitter conclusion of *The Theft of the Sampo*, the impoverishing impact of nursing hatred was the message of many proverbs:

> Se kavottaa kateus kalat veteh, linnut mettäh. (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 29:c)4225.)
>
> Envy makes the fish vanish into the water, the birds into the forest.

> Viha viepi viljan moasta, kateus kaikki kavottaa. (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 29:c)4226.)
>
> Hatred takes the grain from the land, envy makes everything vanish.

> Ei riita rikastuta, eikä tora tavaraa tuota. (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 29:c)5413.)
>
> Row does not make rich, quarrel does not produce goods.

Evil and envious people who "envied everything" were not successful, whereas good and generous people profited (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 50:b)15390). Such a critical ethic clearly challenges the idea of limited good, and controls magical practices with anti-social aims.

Unlike the individual instances of resorting to envy magic, epic representations of self-serving objectives and transfers of wealth to "one's own lands" took the form of collective and public events. The benefit of the community, dividing up the bounty, and the discussion of common values were all linked to the central origin myths. Thus the moral universe with its basic problems had its origins in "the beginning of the world" (cf. *SKVR* I_1 91, n.21). As a symbol of wealth, the *sampo* contained "all kinds of goodness" and "all the best goodness there ever could be".[29] In the Karelian language, goodness means the opposite of evil, in addition to usefulness, help, advantage, property, and riches.

Creating the Unthinkable

The *sampo* was a versatile symbol of value around which cosmology, aesthetics, and ethics merged into a sacred symbol (Kuusi 1994: 69–70, see also Geertz 1973: 127). Even if the dominant frame of interpretation for the *sampo* of Vuokkiniemi concerned livelihoods, it was furthermore associated with freedom and creation – after all, it was the symbol of all things growing. The man who forged the *sampo*, the mythic smith Ilmarinen, was considered the cultural hero of practical knowhow and engineering. He was not only an able craftsman, "the one who knew the art of carpentry".[30] He had proven his skills in hammering the sky so well that "the hammer's imprints cannot be felt, nor the touch of the tongs".[31] When making the *sampo*, he accomplishes the unthinkable: he creates an object that grows organically, a living thing. This is clearly creativity beyond practical knowhow and technological innovation (cf. Hakamies, this volume).

As the smith was the ultimate bricoleur and holder of knowhow – indeed the epitome of creativity (Tarkka 2005: 179) – the runo-singers took pride in calling themselves "word-smiths" (*sanan seppä*) (*SKVR* I_3 2008, 4). Consequently, the masterpiece of the mythic smith, the *sampo*, was associated with creativity, imagination, wisdom and their verbal outcomes: words of poetry. It was believed that Väinämöinen had placed "all the riches and all wisdom" in the *sampo* or that "all the poems and magic" have their origin in the *sampo*.[32] The *sampo* was associated with the abundance of words known by the skilled singer, as in the opening formulae by Arhippa Perttunen:

Aukoan sanasen arkun,	I open the chest of words,
kirjo kannen kiimahutan	spread the many-colored lid
poikki puolin polvilleni.	across my knees.
Ei sampo sanoja puutu,	The *sampo* lacks no words,
luottehia Lemminkäinen.	Lemminkäinen, no charms.
(*SKVR* I_3 1278, 19–23.)	

The association was productive in proverbial phrases as well. The proverbs "The *sampo* lacks no words" and "There are lots of words in the *sampo*" are derived from the Sampo-Cycle, as Anni Lehtonen explains: "It means

Väinämöinen's *sammo*. Väinämöinen went to the dark North to fetch the *sammo*."[33] The one-line phrase could be expanded and varied, for example by changing the image frame of the parallel line. Thus the role of the *sampo* in the origin myth of fishing and the riches of the sea forms a basis for the association presented in the couplet "The *sampo* lacks no words, the closed pond no perch."[34] The same formulaic structure is also applied to the singer able to demonstrate that his or her words are not running out:

Ei mieš šanoja puutu,
kari pienijä kivijä,
umpilampi ahveńie.
(SKS KRA. Marttinen 7:c)1028.)

The man lacks no words,
the shoal no small stones,
the closed pond no perch.

The association between the *sampo* and *sanat* ['words'], supported by alliteration, is based on the fusion of two contrasting images: inexhaustibility, and a container of something valuable. The "case of verse" (*virsilipas*) or "chest of words" (*sanainen arkku*) was the elementary metaphor for a singer's repertoire, memory, and competence (*SKVR* I_3 1283, Haavio 1959 [1957]: 199–200, Tarkka 2005: 124–125). As a producer and container of growth and goodness, the *sampo* could be aligned with the richness of the imagination itself. This metafolkloric interpretation of the *sampo* elaborates on the notion of creativity in the runo-singers' practice: tradition was not perceived as a closed storehouse. Even when viewed as a bounded container, traditional competences and repertoires were spaces of creativity and organic growth that pushed against all limits: "The song cannot be confined to a sack."[35] The singers defined the openness of this space with their boasts, whose core message was the following: "Words don't end by saying, songs don't stop by singing."[36] Like the *sampo* full of grain, the wealth of the store of songs could also be compared to seeds: "There'd be loads of words in my mouth, seeds in my words."[37] Production of poetry meant creating value, and the way ideas were moulded into verbal expression was organic, effortless and natural: it sprouted, grew and yielded crops.

The *sampo* is not the only image binding the idea of the chest of words to the fictive universe of epic poems. In his *Song of Vipunen*, Miihkali Perttunen equates the essential words needed by a sage with the *sampo,* which was presented in the singer's words as an entity full of words. The proto-sage Vipunen, whom Väinämöinen consults, agrees to share his knowledge:

Avasi šanaisen arkun,
virši-lippahan viritti,
poikki-puolim polvillahe.
Tuošta šampo šanoa šoapi,
umpi-lampi ahvenia,
meri pieniä kaloja.
(*SKVR* I_1 401, 51–56.)

He opened the chest of words,
tuned the case of verse,
across his knees.
From there the *sampo* gets words,
the closed pond, perch,
the sea, little fish.

The associative developments of the container metaphor show that the meaning of the chest of words and the case of songs could not be confined to the individual's memory or repertoire. Conceptually, the chest of words was a contradiction in terms, a limitless space for variation and re-ordering. In light of *The Song of Vipunen*'s core message, which emphasizes the transmission of tradition from generation to generation (Tarkka 2005: 139–142), the chest of words also surpassed the imagination of each individual. It was the community's shared reservoir of images which was, in spite of its inherent flexibility, comprehensible only if related, even vaguely, to tradition.[38]

Visualizing the Mythic

Envisioning the *sampo* resulted in narratives and descriptions, concrete images and tropes relying on the metaphoric aspect of language: the inherent good, useful, and eternally productive in it was captured in images that were, in everyday reality, clear and understandable. Moreover, the imaginary world could be represented in other ways than the verbal and the acoustic. In ritual, the symbolic content of the *sampo* myth was acted out at a decisive point of time in the agricultural year: this designated not only the beginning of a new term, but also referred to the "beginning of the world". In Soviet times, old ritual traditions were often expressed or represented in plays or in tableau form by local performers of folklore (Kaukonen 1969: 175). In a play based on the Sampo-Cycle, the *sampo* was construed as a mill invented to "fulfill the wishes of the people." The socialist *sampo* ground up old women and made them young again. The performers resumed their places on stage rejuvenated, singing and dancing. (Timonen 1984 [1979]: 32.) The mental images capturing the idea of the *sampo*, concrete as they may be, were seldom visually represented in traditional culture. The absence of pictorial representations giving explicit form to mythic images may well arise from the interests of the collectors of Kalevala-meter poetry: words and stories conveyed the kind of information they were after. There is, however, one exception.

In the beginning of the 1920s, a famous sage (*tietäjä*) from Vuokkiniemi, Riiko Kallio, was employed by the Finnish artist Akseli Gallen-Kallela. Gallen-Kallela recorded a noteworthy number of Riiko's poems in the Kalevala-meter. When he met Riiko, Gallen-Kallela was planning the illustration of the *Kalevala*. Immersed in his kalevalaic visions, Gallen-Kallela used an innovative method for recording folklore. He first sought to inspire Riiko by reading aloud passages from the epic. As this had no impact, the artist showed Riiko his paintings – some "*Kalevala* sketches" – and immediately, "the poems started to flow." (Tarkka 2009: 19–20.) Gallen-Kallela believed that even for the runo-singers, the *sampo* was an abstract symbol, not an object. He had long been intrigued by the connection between the runo-singers' imagination and visual representation. Indeed, as an artist, he faced the same dilemma when trying to give visual form to images such as the *sampo*. Interviewed by E. N. Setälä, a close friend and colleague from the Kalevala Society, Gallen-Kallela confessed that despite

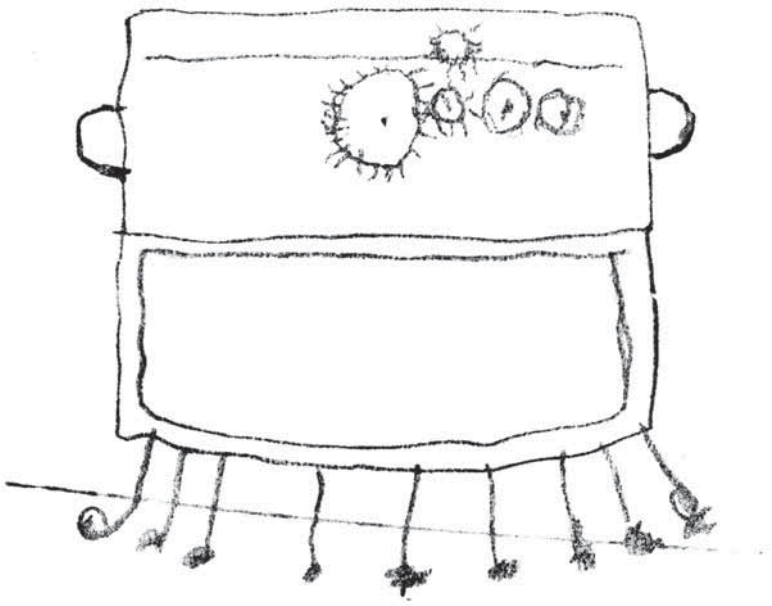

Figure 1. The Sampo. Drawing by Riiko Kallio, 1921. (Original lost; reproduced from Väisänen 1932: 178.)

his many paintings and drawings of the *sampo*, he "has not dared to present a picture of the *sampo*, but has tried to cover it." (Setälä 1932: 362–363.)

To grasp the nature of visual representation, Gallen-Kallela devised a test for Riiko. He gave the runo-singer a pencil and paper, and asked him to draw some objects and characters from the *Kalevala*. Gallen-Kallela timed him. We have no record of Riiko's *Sampo-Poem*,[39] but he did not hesitate in drawing the *sampo*. The task of took him thirteen minutes. (Väisänen 1932: 177–181, Setälä 1932: 189–190.) On the paper, Riiko rendered the abstract aspects of the mythic image concrete. As if designed by the smith and artisan Ilmarinen, Riiko's construal of the *sampo* paid close attention to mechanical details (Figure 1). Riiko also explained the picture verbally. The great rack wheel turns the smaller ones; the *sampo* has handles on its sides because it had to be transportable; at the bottom, one can see nine cleats that fastened the *sampo* securely on iron rails and the bedrock. The blank in the middle was the "opening for products", explained Riiko. (Väisänen 1932: 177, Setälä 1932: 190.) Through it, all the goods and goodness mentioned in the poems entered the world. The *perpetuum mobile* with its organic growth is demystified into a mechanical movement of rack wheels. Nevertheless, the core of the new and the old *sampo* is the same: both produced goods and prosperity without ever stopping. Riiko's commentary on the operation of the *sampo* and the function of its parts turn the static picture into a narrative. The expressive channels for imagination were in constant flux.

Concluding Remarks

The concrete images of the *sampo* had many referents. In vernacular imagination, the abstract ideas turn into concrete images that reveal and explicate things that, in everyday reasoning, escape words. The concrete image allows for metaphoric extensions: the *sampo* as a concrete container of all that is good and the driving force of productivity fuse in the association of the *sampo* and the reservoir of words and poems: the mind of the competent singer. The dilemma between endless production and limited potential is projected onto unexpected domains of human enterprise: artistic creation. In metaphoric projection, emergence and growth are depicted as movement from the otherworld or the grinding of a mill. Luck and goodness are pictured in terms of goods and success in economic activities – simultaneously, however, the narrative evaluates the legitimacy and social consequences of their distribution, limits and potentials.

On the level of narrative, the concreteness of the images is paramount in making the story unfold: symbolic expressions are dramatized into actions and plots. The good that the *sampo* stands for is assessed in terms of how to make it, how to get it, and how to keep it. The utopian potential of the *sampo* is outstanding. The limits of economy and ecology could always be stretched by creating "experientially real" realms of wellbeing. Referring to Michael Kearney's (1969) criticism of the image of limited good, Seppo Knuuttila has noted that "In folklore, the principles of abundance and limited good are, despite their contradiction, tied into one another." This is not related to a fault in vernacular reasoning: even those living in scarcity have recourse to experiences of unlimited luck, albeit temporarily. These experiences are "real", and they do not diminish any totality of luck. (Knuuttila 1992: 270–272.) In the context of mythical narratives and their ritual enactments, the utopian aspect of the *sampo* is more than experiential: it provides an understanding, a reasoning on the ways of the world and the origin of the world as it is. "Myths provide opportunities 'to perform the world,' that is, to engage in sacred play by reciting them or by ritually enacting them," writes William Doty (1986: 15).

An analysis of the vernacular and local ways of imagining the *sampo* has to be sensitive to the cultural context, historical change, and individual variation. As a vehicle for assessing the legitimacy of ownership and distribution of wealth, the *sampo* attracted new ideological interpretations during the Soviet era. The *sampo* was conceived of as the image of the socialist and collective mode of production (e.g. Rugojev 1959: 112–113). The people were pressed to compose new poems in the Kalevala-meter, and the purportedly spontaneous expressions of class consciousness were rewarded (Oinas 1978). In a poem composed by the Vuokkiniemi-born Jouki Hämäläinen in 1948, "the new Sampo" is born under the tutelage of the Communist Party and according to the "advice running from Moscow" (Rugojev 1959: 29). This new *sampo*, akin to a "solid power-machine" (*vankka voimakone*), was an image that never entered oral tradition. Printed in the books for ideological impact, its discord with the vernacular imagination was as obvious as the colonizing impact of Soviet economy.

In Hämäläinen's poem, the economic role of the Viena peripheries was to export its "green gold" to the industrial centers (Rugojev 1959: 18).

Awareness of the multilayered meanings and individual variations helps us grasp all the expressive potential of the *sampo* – or of symbols in general – but never fully exhaust it. Furthermore, it shows us how people create meanings by reworking a limited number of traditional images – in scholarly and artistic practices alike. This bricolage resembles the act of Ilmarinen the smith, who made use of whatever he had, and turned it into something wholly other, even sacred. Language is the outlet of imaginative processes; and language presupposes tradition. That is why the study of traditional imagination and its vernacular formulations is essential to the understanding of art and culture.

As formulated in the poems of Vuokkiniemi, the *sampo* is the totality of all the positive values of human existence. It was created with our skill, bargained over with the otherworld, brought from there, and lost. By ritual means, in utopian discourse and in celebrating the freedom of the mind or creativity, the community sought to benefit from it time after time. As the *sampo* fueled the generation of ever new images, and brought new image frames into contact, it was eventually associated with imagination and the never-ending generation of meanings. Rooted in the ethnographic, historical and ecological realities of the singers, the *sampo* was more than a producer of wealth: it was the symbol of the human capacity to generate values and meanings out of scarce resources.

NOTES

1 In the 1849 version of the *Kalevala*, the myth of the sampo is recounted in the cantos 7 (lines 289–353), 10 (*The Forging of the Sampo*), 38 (lines 293–314), 39, and 42–43 (*The Theft of the Sampo*) (Lönnrot 1989 [1849]).
2 On the relationship between the forms *sammas* and *sampo*, see Frog, this volume.
3 "*Kirjo-kannen, mäńe tiiä midä oli*" (*SKVR* II 112, n.53).
4 "*Taivaan merkki – tähet ja kuut ja semmoiset*" (*SKVR* I_1 457, n.13).
5 "*Eläjä pohatta, šiinä oli šeämeššä kaiken-näköni hyvyš*" (*SKVR* I_1 649).
6 The empirical basis of the argument lies in my doctoral dissertation (Tarkka 2005) on the Kalevala-meter poetry of Vuokkiniemi parish; for the revised English translation of this work, see Tarkka forthcoming a.
7 "*Kaikki moailman hüvüs, kuu ja päivä ja armas aurinkoinen*" (*SKVR* I_1 83a, n.19).
8 Cf. Frog, this volume. According to Martti Haavio (1955: 451–455, see also Honko 1979: 75–77), the myth of the *sampo* has its origins in mythological traditions wherein the world is created by dividing the body of a proto-monster into parts. In the same manner, the totality of everything valuable (luck, catch, etc.) is divided among men. Arhippa Perttunen uses the formulaic structure common to origin incantations in his *Sampo Poem*: the *sampo* is "crumbled" into the sea, and "the wind lulls, the mellow air moves" the crumbs onto the shore and into the "cold village" of the North (*SKVR* I_1 54).
9 "*Se oli neät moailman alku, kuin ruvettih vasta küntüö ta külvüö laittamah*" (*SKVR* I_1 91, n.21).
10 In his manuscript, Lönnrot has revised the original form of the last line, changing

it from *saviharjan hartiolle* ['the shoulder of the clay hill'] to *saviharjan haltiolle* ['the guardian of the clay hill']. I have decided to use the original formulation – cf. *SKVR* I_1 79, 331.

11 For example, SKS KRA. Meriläinen 12:b)1983, 4:b)243, 7:b)884–885, SKS KRA. Paulaharju 55:b)18338, 18369, 18341.

12 See also SKS KRA. Paulaharju 55:b)18331, 18365, Haavio 1967: 214–215.

13 "*Siel' on kyntö, siel on kylvö*", "*tänne kyntö, tänne kylvö*", "*siun kynnön, kylvöm peällä*" (*SKVR* I_1 84, 206–207, 305–306, 310, 313, I_1 79, 196–197, 320–321).

14 "*Meilä kyntö, meilä kylvö, meilä kuu on, meilä päivä*" (*SKVR* I_1 83a, 240–241).

15 SKS KRA. Paulaharju 55:b)18379. Proverbs tend to associate frost and the song of the crane (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 32:c)11055, 11434–11445, 11956–11958); in *The Sampo Poem,* the "peculiar voice of the crane" awakens the people of the North and initiates the battle over the sampo.

16 "*Eikö sillä ymmärrettäne koko maata*" (Lönnrot 1990: 309).

17 Within the *mir*-institution, arable land was the common property of the state, and later of the village community. Based on the number of adult males in a household, lands were divided up among the houses of the village every fifteen years. The first general land division was carried out in 1829. Due to the growing population and the redivision of farmlands, the arable land available to each household was constantly shrinking; the villages became crowded, and there was increasing pressure to clear new farmland. Arable land could be increased by burn-beating, which was however banned in the mid-19th century.

18 "*Vilja*" (*SKVR* I_4 1110, 30), "*veen vilja*" (*SKVR* I_4 1125, 38), "*emännän vilja*" (*SKVR* I_4 1417, 10).

19 "*Kun se jauho neätäsie, Sampo.*" (*SKVR* I_4 2134, n.13.) See further Tarkka 1990: 277–281.

20 "*Siitä turpu, siitä täyty, siitä juurtu sammon juuret*" (*SKVR* I_1 83a, 174–175). Used in *The Creator's Song*, the formula depicts the miraculous impregnation of the Virgin Mary by a berry she picks and eats: "*Tuoštapa turpu, tuosta täyty, tuošta pakšukše pańih*" ['Thence swelled, thence filled, thence got thick (= 'pregnant')'] (*SKVR* I_2 1109, 18).

21 "*Mereh jauhomah šai ijäkšeh, tuoho Valkieh mereh; šuoloo jauho viimesekš, ta šielä on mereššä šuolan jauhonnašša. Ei voia i vettä juua, ńiin on šuolańi meri.*" (*SKVR* I_1 73.)

22 On the North as the mythical home of game and wealth as well as "thickness", see *SKVR* I_1 83a, I_4 1135, I_4 1110, I_2 874.

23 An exceptional creation *ex nihilo* appears only in a *Sampo Poem* clearly influenced by the *Kalevala* (*SKVR* I_2 1022, 16). In this poem the sky is said to have been hammered "out of no matter to start with" (*aivan ainehien alutta*); in the *Kalevala* Lönnrot phrased it like this (Lönnrot 1989 [1849]: 113): "with nothing to start off from, with not a shred ready made." According to Väinö Kaukonen (1956, 75), Lönnrot found the lines in a North-Karelian curing incantation, in which the magic vulnerability of a sage is portrayed with the image of nakedness (*SKVR* VII_4 1724). This case is a rare example of a wholly alien idea to the runo-singing culture being incorporated into an oral poem.

24 See Haavio 1955: 121–141, 451–453.

25 "*Läkkäämäs jaolle sammon*" (*SKVR* I_1 79a, 339); "*Läkkään elon jaolle*" (*SKVR* I_1 647, 260).

26 "*Eikä šiula, eikä miula, šampo olkohon mereššä!*"(*SKVR* I_1 64, 207–208, I_1 83b, 114, Jevsejev 1976: 228.)

27 "*Väinämöini kävi pimeästä Pohjolasta sammoa hakemah. Se on ollut niinkun jauhinkivi. Se on jauhan kun jauhinkivi, mellitsan kivi.*" (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 31:c)9765.)

28 "*Ošapoika, ońńipoika, Jumalan rahańi poika*" (*SKVR* I_2 1160). The miraculous

mill in a boat and the sleigh full of game are images that even appear as epithets of the *sampo*: the *sampo* is a boat or a ship (*SKVR* I_1 61, n.24) bearing money and treasures (*SKVR* I_1 487, 122–123) or a colorful sleigh (*SKVR* I_1 62, 181).

29 "*Kaiken-näköni hyvyš*", "*kaiken hyvyön mitä parasta taisi olla*" (*SKVR* I_1 649, I_1 84 n.56).

30 "*Šep' oñ tiesi timproail'l'a*" (*SKVR* I_1 58, 143).

31 "*Ei tunnu vasaran jäljet, eikä pihtiem pitimet*" (*SKVR* I_1 83a, 151–152).

32 "*Kaikki rikkahuod da viizahuod*" (*SKVR* I_1 4, n.58); "*kaikki runot ja velhouvet*" (*SKVR* I_1 42, n.24).

33 "*Ei sammo sanoja puutu*;" "*Sammossa on sanoja paljo;*" "*Se tarkottaa sitä Väinämöisen sammoa. Väinämöini kävi pimeästä Pohjolasta sammoa hakemah.*" (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 31:c) 9769, 9765.)

34 "*Ei Sammot sanoja puutu, umpilammit ahvenia.*" (*SKVR* I_3 1415, 1–2.)

35 "*Ei laulu säkkih sovi.*" (SKS KRA. Paulaharju 31:c)9673.)

36 "*Ei sanat sanuon puutu, virret ei lauloan lopete.*" (*SKVR* I_3 1290, 30–31.)

37 *"Äijä ois' suussani sanoja, sanoissani siemenijä.*" (*SKVR* I_4 2217, 1–2.)

38 Matti Kuusi (1953: 74) has explored the origin of the proverbial phrase "The *sampo* lacks no words". He contends that the association between *sampo* and words is a secondary interpretation of the traditional idea of a container of words that has become, because of its epithet "many-colored", associated with the *sampo*. In Viena Karelia, the idiom was exclusive to the family of Perttunen, famous for its singers (Kuusi 1953: 73).

39 Gallen-Kallela wrote down an episode of Riiko's *Sampo-Poem*, but the document is lost, just like the originals of Riiko's drawings (Tarkka 1999: 66).

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Veikko Anttonen

The Sampo as a Mental Representation of the Mythic Origin of Growth

Towards a New Comprehensive Theory*

The songs related to the Sampo hold a special position among Finno-Karelian Kalevala-metre poetry. For more than a century, *Kalevala* enthusiasts and academic scholars alike have come up with contested theories regarding the meaning of the mythical Sampo, both as a concept and as a concrete object. Even though the songs were recorded as late as the early 1900s by collectors of folk poetry, the conventional scholarly view holds that the idea of the Sampo as a specific mythic image had already been incorporated into the peasant life of the Finno-Karelian population as an integral element in their mental landscape and mytho-geographic cosmology during the late Iron Age era. The nationalist-romantic mythic discourse has assumed that the interpretation of the Sampo would provide access to a deeper understanding of cosmological elements in the pre-Christian worldview in the Finno-Karelian cultural area around the Baltic Sea region. The songs and the interpretations which have been proposed for explicating contents and meanings of the verses have formed an ongoing interpretive tradition. Academic mythology scholarship can be seen as an inextricable component in the folklore process, a notion proposed by Lauri Honko (see Honko 1998: 41–42, 151). The textual worlds of collector-scholars who have recorded the songs and who have devoted scholarly consideration to explain them are an integral part of the living oral tradition. Scholars of mythology do not only scrutinize mythic narratives, but keep the tradition alive by representing and transmitting their textual worlds to new audiences. Starting from their different frames of reference, scholars have handed down their understanding of mythic images in the folklore data – even if pervaded with a sense of theory and literary form – to new generations. From the times of C. A. Gottlund, Elias Lönnrot, M. A. Castrén, Otto Donner and Kaarle Krohn, the Sampo has been spoken of sometimes in solemn, poetic terms as a coherent epic having its natural habitat in specific situations of folk ritual, sometimes in terms of rationalist simplicity presented analytically in varying forms of etymological and mythological interpretations.[1]

* Earlier versions of sections of this article were published in the Festschrift of Juha Pentikäinen, *Ethnography Is a Heavy Rite* (Anttonen 2000a).

The Sampo in the Mythic Landscape of the Finno-Karelians

To give an account of the idea of the Sampo and its supposed meaning(s), we need to take a closer look at the songs themselves. The songs adapted for the 38th poem of the *Kalevala* illustrate the effort to obtain the enigmatic Sampo from the mythical territory designated as Pohjola (The Northland). Elias Lönnrot, who compiled and published the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* in 1835, based his rendition of the Sampo songs especially on the material collected from the runo-singers Ontrei Malinen, from Vuonninen, and Arhippa Perttunen, from Latvajärvi, on his fourth (1833) and fifth (1834) journeys to Viena Karelia, respectively (Anttonen & Kuusi 1999: 26–28). The kalevalaic Sampo poems portray the cosmogonic scenery in an aquatic landscape through the fate of the primordial culture hero Väinämöinen. The mythic agent drifts in the sea for six years and seven summers after having been shot by the Lapp with an arrow. While on the waves, the hero molds the seabed for human economic life. In the song below, performed by Ontrei Malinen to A. J. Sjögren in 1825 in Vuokkiniemi, the mythical stage is set by the encounter between Väinämöinen, and the Mistress of the Northland (Fi. *Pohjola*) (text regularized following Honko et al. 1993: 655–663):

Kussa maat on maata vassa	Where lands met with land
siihi siunasi apajat	There he blessed seine-shores
kalahauat kaivatteli;	and dug out fish troughs;
kuhu seisattu merelle,	where he halted at the sea
siihi luoti luotoloja,	there he fashioned crags
karipäitä kasvatteli.	and raised up reef-tops.
Niihin laivat lasketah,	That is where ships sink
päät menöö kauppamiesten.	and merchants' heads are dispatched.
(*SKVR* I_1 79, 22–26.)	(Honko et al. 1993: 655.)

Siitä portto Pohjolan emäntä	Then the whore, Northland's mistress
itše löihi soutamahan,	set about rowing
luokse vanhan Väinämöisen	towards old Väinämöinen;
sekä mäni, jotta joutu,	she both rowed and sped
sano tuonne saatuhuso:	said when she got there:
”Oi silma ukko utra	“You wretched old man!
jo kuin jouvut polonen poika	Here you are now, luckless boy
jouvut maille vierahille	here in the foreign lands
paikoille papittomille	places without priests
maille ristimättömille.”	in lands unchristened.”
(*SKVR* I_1 79, 87–96.)	(Honko et al. 1993: 657.)

The Mistress of Northland asks Väinämöinen to forge the Sampo,

kirjokantta kirjotella;	brighten the bright-lid
kahesta karištan luusta	out of two calf-bones,
kolmesta jyvästä osran	three grains of barley
vielä puolesta sitäki	or even half that
(*SKVR* I_1 79, 106–109.)	(Honko et al. 1993: 657.)

Unable to do this, Väinämöinen asks the blacksmith Ilmarinen for help. Ilmarinen sets out for Pohjola, spends his days creating the Sampo and his nights delighting the Maid of the Northland. After the job is done, the Northland is blessed with a device having divine properties for agricultural production:

Sai jo sammon valmehekse
Kirjokannen kirjatuksi.
Siitä Pohjolan emäntä
saatteli omille maille
tuon on seppo Ilmarisen.

Sano tuonne saatuosa:
"Oho vanha Väinämöinen
kuin on Sampo Pohjosessa,
kirjokansi kirjoeltu:
siin ois kyntö, siinä kylvö
siinä vilja kaikenlainen.
Läkkä sammon nouantah
kirjokannen kannantah
pimiästä Pohjosesta"
(SKVR I[1] 79, 187–200.)

He got the Sampo finished
The bright-lid brightened.
Then the mistress of Northland
Brought to his own lands
that man, smith Ilmarinen.

And he said when he got there:
"Old Väinämöinen, there is
such a Sampo in Northland
a bright-lid brightened:
there's ploughing there, sowing there
there's all manner of wealth there.
Go, fetch the Sampo
carry the bright-lid
out of dark Northland!"
(Honko et al. 1993: 659.)

The Etymology of sampo and Related Mythological Terms

The Finnish Germanicist Jorma Koivulehto offers a new linguistic basis for approaching the origins of the earliest strata of mythological terms in Finnish language. Koivulehto proposes an Aryan derivation for the Finnish word *sammas* > *sampo* denoting 'boundary stone', 'stanchion', 'pillar' (Koivulehto 1999: 230). The word may have been adopted into the language spoken in the Baltic Sea region already during the period 3200–2300 B.C.E. It is assumed that the language spoken by the population of the Early Neolithic Stone Age from the middle of the 4th millennium to the Late Neolithic Age (2000–1700/1400 B.C.E) was related to the Finnic languages that developed around the Baltic Sea. Linguists and archaeologists agree that representatives of the Comb-Ceramic pottery culture settled here before the forefathers of present-day Baltic, Germanic and Slavic peoples who spoke Indo-European languages arrived (Häkkinen 1996: 142–144). Archaeological research has shown that the development of cultural traits among the population was not straightforward after the Comb-Ceramic period. The Late Comb-Ceramic cultural stage, characterized by a deteriorated ceramic style, prevailed between 3500 and 2900 B.C.E. It was followed by the Corded-Ware Ceramic Culture or the Battle-Axe Culture (3000–2500 B.C.E.), the language of which was of Indo-European origin. The south-western part of present-day Finland received strong Aryan and Iranian cultural influences around 2500–2000 B.C.E., leaving a rich stratum of loanwords with mythological content (Koivulehto 1999: 222, Salo

2006). The adoption of new vocabulary with mytho-religious significance is inseparably connected with more efficient working tools, shiny sharpened perforated battle-axes, and with changing settlement patterns brought along by agriculture and animal husbandry as new forms of subsistence.

Jorma Koivulehto has shown that the distribution area of these mythological terms is quite constricted. The Aryan origin of *sammas* < **stamb^{h}as* belongs to the same linguistic strata as the words for 'god' and for 'heaven'. Thus the Finnish word *jumala* ['god'] belongs to the western group of Aryan loanwords; *jumala* is derived from the Aryan noun *dyumna-* and the adjective **dyumān* ['heavenly; clear; shining'] being the attribute of Indra and belonging to the family of words in Indo-European denoting the phenomenon of heaven: ancient Indic *dyáv-* ['heaven']; *djú-pati* ['sky-lord'] < IE **dyew-s* (= Greek *Zeu-s* = Latin *jú-*: **Ju-pater* > *Ju-piter* > *Juppiter* ['Father Sky']). (Koivulehto 1999: 228.) Finnish *taivas* ['sky'] is derived from Aryan (Indo-Iranian) **daivas*, corresponding to Proto-Germanic **teiwas* and Proto-Baltic **deivas*, all derivative of the PIE etymon **deiwos*.

In ordinary colloquial Finnish, *jumala* ['god'] was not a proper name referring to a celestial super-human agent, but a generalized concept. In addition to the sky and thunder, the word could be used to refer to the sun or the moon, as well as such powerful individuals as witches, makers of spells, and shamans. In Finnish popular traditions, the words *jumala* ['god'] and *luonto* ['nature'] are mutually related. These words were used to refer to a variety of things and the characteristics ascribed to them. There are two important notions – closely connected with each other – that determined their semantic content: the idea of transformation and the idea of growth. Transformation, elemental in growth production, was a defining property in persons, objects and things attributed by the vernacular term *jumala* denoting 'god'. Whether in issues of personal health, of collective economic value, of magico-religious acts performed by witches (Fi. *noita*) and *tietäjä*s (agentive noun derived from the Finnish verb *tietää* ['to know'], denoting a vernacular ritual specialist), in specific social situations transformation was a necessary outcome of activity in which 'power' (Fi. *väki*) was to be manipulated, obtained or drawn from various animate or inanimate entities and places of nature by means of incantations in order to achieve the desired end.

The late Finnish folklorist and historian of religions Martti Haavio has posited that in vernacular contexts, *jumala* is not only considered a superhuman agent that creates, but also a linguistic index to *prima materia* (*genesis*, *physis*) 'behind' a specific *theonym* out of which a thing or an object with specific social value is created (see Haavio 1959: 280–281). To designate an agent, a person or an object as a member in the generic class of 'god', it has to have the capacity to produce, enable or enhance the positive ends pursued by people in their social and economic life.

Mythological Theories of the Sampo

Of the early pioneers of mythology scholarship in Finland, Uno Holmberg-Harva and E. N. Setälä devoted considerable attention to the enigma of the

Sampo. Setälä (1932: 547–548) modified his theory from that of Holmberg-Harva (Holmberg 1918; Harva 1943) and of Kai Donner (1927), who both had interpreted the Sampo as a mythic world pillar after a careful study of the religious life and narrative traditions of the hunting, agricultural and pastoral peoples of Northern Eurasia. Harva placed the testimony of the textual and linguistic materials that Setälä used in a different mythological framework (Holmberg 1922: 10–19, Holmberg 1964 [1927]: 333–348). Emphasizing the ritual aspect, Harva posited that the Sampo was a man-made replica of the mythic world pillar, represented in a sacrificial context in a community cult. This supposition was based on the evidence of shamanistic practices not only among the peoples of Northern Eurasia, but also among the ancient Germanic and Saami tribes. (Harva 1943: 30–42, 114–115.) The name of the Sampo is derived from *sammas* (>*sampo*), which Harva (1944: 344) considered to be formed analogously to the pairs *taivas>taivo* ['sky'] and *tursas>turso* ['malicious sea monster']. Harva defended his views on a number of occasions, in particular against the interpretation of the Sampo as a "mill", favoured by folklorists and philological scholars. According to Harva, the Sampo and the *kirjokansi* ['the bright lid of the heavens'] do not refer to the myth of the mill *Grotti* in Germanic epic poetry, but are images which formed part of the worldview of the ancestors of the Finns. "What else could the *sammas* or Sampo mean, in referring to a pillar, than the supporter of the heavens, the so-called world pillar," wrote Harva (1944: 339). As he saw it, prehistoric peoples needed the symbolic representation of the mythic world pillar, supporting the heavens at the North Star to promote a good harvest and general fertility (Harva 1944: 339, see also Anttonen 1987: 138–141). Departing from the theory proposed by Harva, E. N. Setälä argued for the view that the Sampo is not the mythic representation of the pillar of the world, but the North Star to which the pillar was attached by the nail (Fi. **pohjannaula* ['nail of the north/bottom']). The Sampo that the culture hero Ilmarinen had forged at the time of the creation of the world was no less than the Nail-Star itself. (Setälä 1932: 536, 548–549, 560.)

In the theory proposed by Martti Haavio (1967: 189–203), the Hindu epic the *Mahābhārata* and the *Višnu-purānas* played an important role. Using motif-historical analysis as his method, Haavio set out from these textual sources to interpret the Sampo as a cosmic rotating machine, the churn of the gods, which keeps the world revolving. According to Haavio, the Sampo was the churn with which the gods turned the sea of milk into the drink of immortality; the revolving shaft, the sacred central mountain, was supported by a tortoise, one of the bodily forms taken by Višnu as well as one of the mythic animals antecedent to the creation of the world. Haavio extended his vision from Finland to India by identifying links between names relating to frogs and Asian myths of the tortoise that supports the world.[2] Sacred pillars which stand upon the tortoise appear in the Hindu temples in India.

In Europe, mythic animals have been applied to the base of the millstone, in which the axle of the wheel revolves (Setälä 1932: 482–486). In the Slavic languages, the form *zaba* ['frog'] denotes the base which supports a hinged door. In Russian, the forms *zabina*, *zabka* are diminutives of *zaba*

Photo 1. Depiction of a sacred pillar erected on top of the tortoise, and located in the middle of the Hindu temple area. Photo: Veikko Anttonen, Fort Kochi, Kerala, January 2011.

['frog'] and refer to the cover of a revolving millstone to which the end of the axle is attached. Haavio concluded that the Sampo, which is referred to in parallel verse as *kirjokansi* or *kirjokanta* ['bright lid of the heavens'], is equivalent to the support of the rotating machine on which the vertical axle revolves (Haavio 1967: 189–203). The gate of Pohjola, according to Haavio, is analogous to this revolving vertical axle:

portit Pohjolan näkyvi	Pohjola's gates are in sight,
paistavi pahan veräjät	the evil gates glitter
kannet kirjo kiimottavat	the bright covers are glowing
miehen syöjästä kylästä	of the man-eating village
urohon upottajasta.	the village that drowns heroes.
(*SKVR* VII$_1$ 679, 33–37	(Kuusi, Bosley & Branch 1977: 123.)
[Ilomantsi. Eur. G, n. 646].)	

The mythological frameworks presented by Haavio, along with those of Harva, can be adopted as a point of departure in an attempt to achieve a more comprehensive and geographically grounded explanation of the Sampo. As scholars of religion and mythology, both Uno Harva and Martti Haavio

Photo 2. Closeup of the tortoise depicted in Photo 1. Photo: Veikko Anttonen, Fort Kochi, Kerala, January 2011.

stressed the importance of an awareness of the methodological significance of "growth" as a concept of value giving shape to the contents of mythic narratives and thus also to systems of ritual representations in folk societies.

Pohjola and the Topography of the Sacred

In explaining the Sampo, *Pohjola*, denoting the Northland, plays an important role. Anna-Leena Siikala and Lotte Tarkka have both shown in their work how the performers of epic folk poetry created their narrative worlds by means of the otherworld and its topography. Siikala (1992: 280–284) and Tarkka (1990: 242) point out that in epic narratives the world beyond is not actually a separate cosmological realm of life. Epic poetry testifies to the constant crossing and transcending of boundaries, both in human minds and in social life itself. In the folk tradition, according to Tarkka, the alternation between place and placelessness, status and its absence, signify that the boundary between the visible and the invisible can surface in almost any situation, attaching various metaphorical and metonymic ideas to itself. Tarkka notes that the otherworld can take the form of Pohjola, the womb, a burial ground, a forest, a grave, Tuonela, a strange village or a foreign country. These various "others" form a paradigmatic series, whose meanings form a web: in mythic discourse based on shared mental imagery in specific value-laden social settings, narrative elements across categorical boundaries are united into a cosmological whole. (See Tarkka 1990: 255, 1994: 292–296.)

The Pohjola of the Sampo songs is defined in terms of a particular topography of the otherworld. In Finnish folk poetry, Pohjola is analogous to Manala: the underworld, the dwelling-place of the dead. The designation *Manala* refers to low-lying ground, lying beyond a river or strait. Manala lies towards the north. In folk narratives, Pohjola/Manala is described as a mythic island in the primeval sea, surrounded by Sarajas or Saraoja, the open waters. In addition to Sarajas, Pohjola is separated from the world of the living by the River of Pohjola, the River of Tuonela, the chasm of Manala, the age-old brook of Manala. The River of Tuonela is the boundary between this world and the other, where everything is reversed in relation to the world of the living. For the dead, crossing the river is difficult; in the words of the folk poem, they are forced to face:[3]

rutjan koskehen kovahan,	the hard rapid of the Rutja,
terin miekan seisovahan,	standing edges of swords,
keihään karehtivahan.	becoming enchanted by spears.
(*SKVR* XII$_1$ 4240α, 35–37)	

Pohjola/Manala is a bleak and desolate island, dark and sunless, where nothing grows; it is settled by the *Ulappalan umpisilmät* – the blind people of Ulappala. Its yards are long, its houses doorless and windowless. It is described as the home and birthplace of disease and death, as *Pimentola* – the "dark place"; Väinämöinen recommends no one who has not experienced death to take up such a venture. The hero himself, of course, does make the journey to the dark home of death, to obtain the missing words he needs to build his boat. Of Manala, Väinämöinen says: "Many are those who went there, only few are those who have returned". Väinämöinen, however, saves himself and returns to the world of the living by turning himself into a snake and slipping through the holes in the iron web, woven of iron thread by the Maid and Boy of Tuoni. (Haavio 1935: 57, Kemppinen 1960: 68–69.)

Pohjola appears in mythic discourse as the otherworldly territory which is the source and origin of all growth of life. However, Pohjola is not represented as the pure and seamless state of original harmony designated as paradise in Mesopotamian and Near Eastern religious traditions. As a mythological space, it is neither a paradise on earth nor a shining heaven. Rather, Pohjola is defined by its semblance of death. Spatial metaphors depict Pohjola as a representation of a formless and diffuse site, a location of feminine powers and lacking clear boundaries – "the man-eating village, the village that drowns heroes" – governed by the impure rather than the pure, by darkness and cold rather than by growth-supporting light and warmth. The forging of the Sampo is a project whereby the mythic female agent, Louhi, gains power over the heavens, in other words the right to define the limits and conditions which the "people of Kaleva(la)" will have to take into account in their communal life. Human beings, who have an innate tendency to reach for the heavens, are forced like Väinämöinen to snatch the Sampo from the stone hill of Pohjola, in other words to return to that original beginning of time in which the creator-heroes performed their first feats, creating the boundary between this world and the other, between form

and formlessness. The mythic Pohjola and its Mistress are representations of notches, clefts, ruptures, cracks (cf. *Loviatar* < Fi. *lovi* ['opening', 'crack'] < Germ. **law(w)ō*; root **leu-* ['to cut']: see Koivulehto 1999: 38, Hofstra 1985: 403; on Fi. *lovi* < *langeta loveen* ['to fall into a trance'], see Haavio 1967: 290–296). *Lovi* is a mental representation of a mythic site where that which is culturally whole, solid and complete fractures or disintegrates and in which parts split off from the original whole. The idea of the wholeness is emphasized in the task given to Ilmarinen by the gap-toothed crone of Pohjola. She sets Ilmarinen to shape the Sampo:

yhen joukosen sulasta
yhen otrasen jyvästä
yhen villan kylkyöstä
maiosta mahovan lehmän
yhen värttinän murusta.
(*SKVR* I_1 54, 153–157,
following Kuusi et al. 1977: 114.)

from one feather of a swan
from one barley-grain
one snippet of wool
the milk of a barren cow
from one piece of a distaff.
(Kuusi et al. 1977: 114.)

Pohjola can be interpreted as an allegorical representation of the trouble and difficulty without which nothing that transcends the ordinary can be achieved. No one can cross over to the otherworld and bring back the Sampo, and yet remain whole, a complete entity of cosmic material; it is only possible as a thought, which the human being can realize in various ways – both through ritual and through everyday work; usually, however, only with blood, sweat and tears. Thus the Sampo is actualized at the boundary point between this world and the other, i.e. in times, sites and locations set apart and marked off by the attribute "sacred" (see Anttonen 1996a, 1996b, 2000b, 2010). The idea of the Sampo can thus be approached as a form of mental imagery by which the status of being set apart is bestowed on specific objects, persons, times, places, and on specific topographical markers, perceived as anomalous, which are deemed of special value for the community in question and its social order.

Explaining the Sampo as a Mental Representation of the Mythic Source of Growth

Matti Kuusi has suggested that the songs which tell of the Creation, of the Giant Oak, of the Maid of Gold and of the *tietäjä* – the one who knows – may have constituted a loose "epic" narrative already in pre-Christian antiquity. Kuusi assumes that the songs dealing with the heroic deeds of Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen on the mythological stage of the creation of the world were sung in particular ritual settings and in a particular order; thus songs focusing on the Sampo were sung in connection with the autumn and spring sowing, first reciting the words of sowing and then the songs of the forging and stealing of the Sampo (Kuusi 1980: 223, Honko et al.1993: 768). The forging of the Sampo and of the Maid of Gold are mythological

narratives, whose probable setting has been assumed to be in the agricultural communities of the Gulf of Finland. According to Matti Sarmela (1994: 86), it is precisely in the *tietäjä*-culture of the Iron Age that human interest begins to be dominated by questions of fertility and reproduction. Sarmela considers that the Finnish institution of the *tietäjä* and the ability to produce iron may have been closely related. The two central religious symbols of the period are the iron axe and the oval flint stones used for kindling fire (Fi. *tuluskivet*). These were used ritually, on the one hand in connection with the sowing of seed (on land first cleared by slashing and burning); on the other hand as sexual symbols, both masculine (the axe) and feminine (the stones), to maintain and promote the two things central to the existence and continuity of the community: an abundant harvest and the birth of children. (See Sarmela 1994: 132–133, Salo 1997: 161–167, Purhonen 1998: 42.)

With regard to the motif of the theft of the Sampo, the Finnish historian Jouko Vahtola has emphasized Peräpohja, the Far End of Ostrobothnia, as the objective of the kalevalaic heroes, and has assumed that the Sampo songs describe the great "wilderness era" of the Häme culture. When the kalevalaic heroes journey to the north to steal the Sampo, this – according to Vahtola – describes the conflict over scarce fur resources, and above all over the right to collect taxes from the original Lapp (Sámi) population, between the older settlements of Häme and their offshoot "daughter" communities of the North. (Vahtola 1983: 29–30.) Anna-Leena Siikala, however, argues for the view that the Sampo songs cannot be localized in any particular geographical or historical context. She situates the songs in the Viking Age and the time of the Christianization of Finland (the 9th to the 12th centuries). They are structurally closely related to Scandinavian mythology, but in terms of their content, they are for the most part international migratory narratives. On the basis of place-name research, Siikala suggests that in the area around the Gulf of Finland in the 9th century there were individual, local versions of the songs in which such themes as theft and abduction were particularly topical. (Siikala 1992: 151–152.)

There are good grounds for assuming that the motif of the world pillar in prehistoric and also in historical popular thinking refers to a system of reflexive beliefs by which communal ideals, values and goals were expressed. According to Åke Hultkrantz (1996: 36–43), there are two levels which need to be taken into account when exploring the motif of world pillar. At a cosmological level, the pillar motif is represented in myths and beliefs as the sacred center of the world, the function of which is to support the sky. At a ritual level the pillar is represented in a replica such as a pole or alternatively a tree, a house or a temple around which the socio-religious life revolves. "In particular, the world pillar stands out as the central symbol in a cosmological structure that marks the Universe both as space and as time: it symbolizes the beginning of the world and, if it falls, the world will end." (Hultkrantz 1996: 43.)

Singing of the mythical Sampo, the singers were narrating their social recognition of the fundamental categorical distinctions whereby the cognitive status of various growth-producing objects and ideas were expressed and maintained. By means of the Sampo, distinctions between the material and

the mental, heavens and the earth, gods and humans, the dead and the living were bound together, thereby creating a discourse of crossing boundaries between social categories. Boundaries as such are invisible, but they become visible and observable in specific social situations when assumptions and propositions that constrain people's knowledge about their conceptual reality need to be addressed. The discourse of the Sampo is not merely a metaphoric glossing of the cultural significance of things and objects that produce growth, health and prosperity, but constitutes a conceptual shift from a material thing to an efficacious image of a thing – provided that there are some recognizable attributes to be perceived in it. (Boyer 1994: 149–151.)

The Sampo can be conceptualized as a symbolic signifier, the signified referents of which include the practices of agriculture, pastoral animal husbandry, wilderness hunting and trapping, and seafaring. Human beings sacralize their productive activities by setting apart and marking off the beginning and end of economic seasons. In order to remain stable and strong, institutions require recurring, periodic sacralizing rituals. Although the theonyms in Udmurt, Komi and Khanty predate the Iron Age cognate of Ilmarinen, I am tempted to agree with Uno Harva (1946): Ilmarinen comes on stage as a culturally postulated human-like agent to promote growth-producing fertility. He obtains his position in the mythic discourse as a blacksmith due to the value environment of the Iron Age when it was necessary to emphasize the idea of growth and transformation (see also Hakamies, this volume). The ideas of renewal, seasonality and change were inherent not only in the element of fire itself, but also in the place where iron is produced, in the smithy/workshop (Fi. *paja*). As far as the technical term is concerned, Ilmarinen can be labeled either a god or a culture hero; what must be taken into account, however, is that the notion has to be detached from its conventional, mostly theistic connotations whereby something is categorized as divine.

Synty seppo Ilmorinen,	Craftsman Ilmorinen
Yöllä synty, yöllä kasvo,	Was born at night, raised at night,
Ei tietty nimeä panna:	No specific name was given:
Iso kutsu Ilmoriksi,	Father called Ilmori,
Äiti Armoksi nimetti,	Mother named Armo,
Sisaret sotijaloksi.	Sisters, dirt-foot.
Päivällä meni pajahan;	During the day he went to the smithy,
Pani paitansa pajaksi,	Put his shirt as the smithy,
Vasaraksi kyynärvarren.	His forearm as a hammer.
(*SKVR* I_4 160, 26–31, 33–36; following Haavio 1967: 136.)	

The idea of the Sampo can be seen as a central mythological concept at a time when the revolutions of the heavens, the movements of the stars, and the temporal boundaries of the revolutions of the sun and the moon provided not only the basis of recording the passage of time, but also of the regulation of economic activity and communal life. By forging the firmament, Ilmarinen becomes the mythic representation of anything that

is alive and growing at a boundary space between this world and the other, and the value of which is held stable and strong. There is no question about the symbolic charge that was attached to the element of iron and the whole process of separating out of the metal from the raw ore. According to the archaeologist Deborah J. Shepherd, the iron slag which is a byproduct in the process of separating iron from the impurities of iron ore had a symbolically loaded meaning in Iron Age village culture and its funeral rites. The little that we know of Iron Age settlements that has been archaeologically confirmed is based on burial grounds. According to Shepherd, the smelting of iron ore and its forging into iron may have been a form of ritual activity. Iron was a highly value-loaded cultural product; thus the slag resulting from the ritual activity of smelting iron may have taken on a symbolic value in popular thinking, in which the metaphoric boundary between this world and the otherworld was a particularly powerful image. Iron slag has been metaphorically linked with the process of separation and differentiation occurring in burial rites, in which the human soul moving from this world to the other is separated from the body in collective ritual. This idea foregrounds the role of the blacksmith as the "technician of the sacred", the religious specialist needed in crossing the boundary between this world and the next. It is even more important at the cognitive level, in making possible the distinction between the smithy, as a value-loaded, illicit space where iron is melted and manufactured, as opposed to the profane, licit space outside. (Shepherd 1997: 19–20.) With regard to archaeological findings of iron slag deposits, it may be the case – as has been critically noted by Jussi-Pekka Taavitsainen – that these sites are described as cemeteries on insufficient grounds (Taavitsainen 1991: 10). That being the case, the symbolic approach to slag presented here needs to be reconsidered. Shepherd, however, does not claim that iron slag had a magical-religious meaning; she merely suggests the possibility that slag does not occur at cremation cemeteries by chance, and that there may be a symbolic linkage between slag and the conceptions of the dead person's body and condition of the soul in the otherworld in the popular thinking of the Middle and Later Iron Age.

Arguing along the lines of the anthropomorphic theory of religion proposed by Stewart Guthrie (1993: 4, 196–204), Ilmarinen is generated as a mythic agent by granting human-like qualities not only to the sky, i.e. to *ilma* ['air'], but also to other natural and social phenomena. By forging the Sampo, the bright lid of the heavens, Ilmarinen establishes humanity as an inseparable property of the world. The failure of the heroes to steal the Sampo, a mythic representation of the source of wealth from Pohjola, and its disintegration into the sea, is an allegory. It stresses that at the time when the world began, the stage was set for humans by the work of Väinämöinen, but that the human quality is not in the world just for the taking. It varies according to actions and intentions. Interestingly, the Finnish psycholinguist Eliel Lagercrantz (1950: 17–18) already suggested sixty years ago that the mill theorists perceive the Sampo as the feminine archetype; the world pillar theorists, on the other hand, are mentalists whose contents of perception and interpretation are determined by masculine sacrality. According to Lagercrantz, the Sampo is not an external thing but

the mental representation of the fertility-aspect of the cosmos. Lagercrantz suggested that, psychologically, the Sampo myth depicts the identification of the ego with the totality of the world and an unconscious attempt to repel feelings of both guilt and fears of death. The theft motif aims at expelling the demonic powers threatening the ego. (Lagercrantz 1950: 18.)

Growth and fertility are integral to the human condition. M. A. Castrén wrote down a following belief in Uhtua, Viena Karelia:

> Siivatta on sampahan jalan juuresta, kirjokannen tutkalmesta (see Harva 1944: 336).
>
> Livestock is from the root of the foot of the *sammas*, from the end of the bright lid of the heavens.

With this charm, the herdsman could resort to the origin of the animal in situations when milk is running dry (see Harva 1944: 336), and restore his confidence in being able to keep the forces of Pohjola at bay and ensure the increase of cattle and a good harvest by ritual reference to the mythic origins of growth. The Sampo as a representation of eternal life becomes evident in the popular saying given by Elias Lönnrot in his Finnish–Swedish dictionary (1856): *eihän tuo toki eläne maasammaksi* ['there is no way for him/her to live as long as earth-*sammas*']. The same expression is met in Estonia: *ega ta või ilmasambaks jääda* ['there is no way for him/her to survive as long as earth-*sammas*']. (Lönnrot 1856 II: 506.)

Conclusion

The Sampo is a representation of the idea of growth and its mythic origins. The concept of Ilmarinen is connected with the notion of *ihminen* ['man'] as a mortal being (Fi. *mana* and *marras*), continuously confronted with its immortal counterpart, the anthropomorphized sky, its revolving movement, and its lights and warmth. The Mistress of Pohjola, the ruler of that rocky and barren realm, lacked these human qualities. In order to make Pohjola a territory of regeneration and immortality, she needed to have the Sampo, a mythic pillar supporting the heavens and providing the source for growth. The Mistress of Pohjola asks Ilmarinen to forge a thing that has a human disposition to produce and thus is capable of making the most out of the *ontos* simply by existing; growing being its fundamental nature.

The Sampo is thus not an object, although it is described as one. The Sampo is the totality of the world looked at from the perspective of human interest. The Sampo could be forged only in Pohjola, i.e. in the otherworld, in which the constitution of the human world has disintegrated and is open to regeneration or reincarnation. In the human world, it is counter-intuitive for an agent to exist which is productive and regenerative without being constrained by the laws of nature. The American cultural anthropologist Roy A. Rappaport (1999) has adopted the Greek term *logos* to refer to cosmic orders established in liturgy. According to Rappaport, a culture needs a specific *logos*, an ordering principle that subordinates and binds

all that exists into a coherent and enduring whole. Interestingly, Rappaport does not postulate the *logos* as a truth that exists autonomously apart from the human condition. Humans have a cognitively evolved capacity to understand the wholeness of natural phenomena and processes such as growth, decay, seasonality and the organic characteristics of species. (Rappaport 1999: 370.)

Since prehistoric times, and often borrowing from one another, human cultures have postulated some concept or idea which sums up and embodies everything which represents wholeness for that culture. In ancient Egypt, this *logos* was the *Ma'at*, in Zoroastrianism the *Asha*, in ancient China the *Tao*. In Greek, *logos* denotes 'reason; sense; word'. In the Gospel of John in the New Testament, it is used to refer to Christ. The word, the *logos*, means that there is no contradiction between Christ's divine and human character; Jesus Christ is of the same substance as God (Gr. *homóusios*). (See e.g. Pyysiäinen 1997: 83–84.) A similar idea can be found in the Near East, in Asia and in the languages of the indigenous peoples of the world. (Rappaport 1999: 353–370, see also Rappaport 1994: 157–158.)

The narrative motifs concealed in the Sampo songs can be seen as sacred postulates of this type, which are never – or should never be – questioned. When the Sampo is envisioned as the mythic pillar which upholds the sky, it is used as a metaphoric expression of the unity and singleness of the universe; its precise location, however, is ultimately not outside human existence, but lies within the mind of every individual, and as such generates mental representations both of that individual's own thoughts and experience and of the surrounding reality. It is sacred postulates of this kind that, according to Roy Rappaport, are the hallmarks of a religion. They characterize religious thinking and religious discourse within a particular cultural context, especially because they represent a different type of logic compared to everyday thought and discourse. There is no objective method whereby they can be proved either true or false. From this impossibility of questioning the *logos* follows its normativity: for its adherents, it is an *orthos* which demands the use of established modes of expression. At the same time, however, this boundedness of the truth contains the idea that it may be merely a doctrine – a *doxa* – and thus ultimately a matter of opinion or personal preference. For the outsider who has not committed himself or herself to the *logos*, its status as a *doxa* may be perceived as a deception (*pseudos*). From the perspective of the distinction between external and internal, no *logos* is sacred in itself; its sacrality is based on the claim of its truth. As Rappaport puts it: "Its unconcealment must be achieved by work of some sort, the work of words in poetry, of stone in statues, and perhaps most importantly, the work of people in ritual" (Rappaport 1994: 158–159).

NOTES

1 See e.g. Setälä 1932, Mäkeläinen 1939, Harva 1943, Hautala 1954, Haavio 1967, Turunen 1979, Kuusi 1985, Tarkka 1988, Pentikäinen 1989, Sarmela 1994, Anttonen & Kuusi 1999.
2 On explaining the Sampo on the basis of the taxonomic anomaly of the frog and thus its imagined capacity to produce fertility, see Mäkeläinen 1939: 171–175; on anomaly as "sacred", see Anttonen 1999: 16–20.
3 See Haavio 1967: 408, Kemppinen 1967: 56–61, Siikala 1992: 137–139.

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Pekka Hakamies

Ilmarinen and Popular Techno-Utopian Conceptions*

Alongside Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen is a central figure of kalevalaic epic and it was sometimes even claimed that he was Väinämöinen's brother, yet in both the kalevalaic poetry and in academic research, Ilmarinen has nevertheless remained in the shadow of his more famous companion. Mikael Agricola, the Finnish reformer and translator of the Bible, included a list of the pagan gods of the people of Häme and another of the people of Karelia in the introduction to his translation of the Psalter (1551). Among the gods of the people of Häme, Agricola included Ilmarinen as a divine being on a par with Väinämöinen.

The name *Ilmarinen* appears among the old surnames of Finland Proper and Satakunta[1] and as a place name in Finland Proper. In addition, according to tax records from the 16th century, there were people with the epithet *Ilmarinen* in Ruokolahti and Juva. (Vahtola 1987: 40.) The name Ilmarinen, as well as some features which indicate his divinity, have their background in old Finno-Ugric mythology. The name of the sky-god of the Udmurts is *Inmar*. The earliest mention of Ilmarinen in Finnish written sources is in Mikael Agricola's list of pagan gods, where Ilmarinen is presented as the people of Häme's god of the sky or weather, and also as a protector of travellers. Uno Harva presents additional evidence which indicates the divinity of Ilmarinen. For example, he mentions the ruler of weather *Ilmaris* among the Sámi, and examples of incantations which specifically refer to Ilmarinen as the creator of good weather and favourable winds – in other words as filling a role corresponding to that found in Agricola's list. (Harva 1946.) The figure Ilmarinen as such also bears a similarity to the Germanic god Njǫrðr. According to Harva, however, there is no real indication that Ilmarinen could have been the sky-god who fertilizes the earth with his rain and thunder. The only sign of this is in the frequently appearing motif of Ilmarinen together with Väinämöinen as the creators of the first fire at the beginning of the incantation, *The Origin of Fire* (*Tulen synty*).

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In old epic kalevalaic poems, Ilmarinen is first and foremost a cultural hero, a smith of superhuman skill who created various necessary things in the world. Sometimes his skills as a smith swell to cosmic proportions. In the *sampo*-poems, Väinämöinen negotiates the fashioning of the *sampo* in the chthonic realm of Pohjola, during which he mentions forging the vault of heaven as one of Ilmarinen's great feats:

Ei ole seppeä selvempeä,
Takojoa tarkempoa,
Kuin on seppo Ilmorini:
Se on taivosen takonun,
Ilman kannen kalkutellun;
Ei tunnu vasaran jälki,
Eikä pihtiem pitämät.
(*SKVR* I_1 84, 125–131.)

There is no smith cleverer,
no craftsman more precise,
than is the smith Ilmorini:
he has forged heaven,
hammered the vault of the sky;
no trace of a hammer can be felt,
nor marks of the tongs.

There are also references to the same heroic feat in other epic poems, on the basis of which it is assumed that there was an independent mythic poem about Ilmarinen creating the vault of heaven in an earlier period (Kuusi et al. 1977: 524). There is no description of Ilmarinen forging heaven in the poems. Only the final result of his work is mentioned as an accomplishment after the fact in the *sampo*-poems. Above all, the creation of the cosmos would have an archaic mythic foundation connected to divinity or to the actions of a cultural hero at the beginning of time, but which would not have been connected to the later, more human side of Ilmarinen. Ilmarinen, or an otherwise unnamed smith, also made the rake used to retrieve the world-egg, Lemminkäinen or Väinämöinen from the bottom of the sea. Contemporaneous with these mythic works of creation, Ilmarinen made numerous things which were necessary in daily life and also jewellery for the people closest to him. In a version of *The Origin of Iron* (*Raudan synty*) from Viena Karelia is encountered the following short list:

Oli seppä Ilmollini,
Se pani paitansa pajaksi,
Turkkisa tuhuttimeks',
Vasaraksi kyynäspeä,
Polvesa alusimeks',
Se tako naisten tarpehia,
Vyölliskoukkuja kohenti,
Naisten neulojen neniä,
Miesten miekkojen teriä.
(*SKVR* $I_{4,1}$ 133, 21–29.)

There was the smith Ilmollini,
he set up his shirt as a smithy,
his fur coat as the bellows,
as a hammer, his elbow,
his knee as an anvil,
he forged women's paraphernalia,
repaired belt hooks,
the points of women's needles,
the blades of men's swords.

Oli seppo Ilmarinen,
Tako rauasta rahia,
Hopiasta huolitteli
(*SKVR* VII_1 436, 1–3.)

There was the smith Ilmarinen,
forged an iron stool,
one of silver, fashioned

In *The Courtship Competition* (*Kilpakosinta*) and *The Courtship of Hiisi's Maiden* (*Hiidestä kosinta*), the night-maiden or other young woman comes to Ilmarinen and informs him that a competing suitor has set out, demanding jewellery as payment for information about this:

Hoi'ot seppo Ilmarinen,	Oh, you are the smith Ilmarinen,
Taos risti rinnalleni,	forge me a cross for my breast,
Päällä pankani paranna,	improve the band I wear,
Koske korvirenkahani!	touch my earrings!
Nyt sanon hyvät sanomat.	Now I will tell you the good news.
(*SKVR* VII$_1$ 434, 56–60.)	

One of Ilmarinen's mythic feats is making the first *kantele*, the traditional Finno-Karelian harp. In some variants, the *kantele* was created from parts of the great pike which Väinämöinen caught:

Tuo on seppä Ilmarinen	That is the smith Ilmarinen
Takoja iänikuinen	craftsman, of age eternal
Tako tuosta kanteloisen	forged from that a *kantele*
Hau'in suuren hartioista	from the shoulders of the great pike
Ve'en koiran koukkuluista	from the hook-bones of the dog of the water
(*SKVR* VII$_1$ 626, 84–88.)	

Other alternative materials are the bones of other animals, such as birds or wild reindeer. In Matti Kuusi's opinion, it is possible to recognize remnants of ancient animal myths which have tendered resources for the first *kantele* in *The Origin of the Kantele* (*Kanteleen synty*). (Kuusi 1963: 148–150.)

According to Kuusi, images of *Kalevias*, ancient smith-god of the Balts, stand in the background behind the figure of Ilmarinen as a skilful smith. Kuusi, and before him August Ahlqvist and E. N. Setälä, considered it very likely that the name of the Finnic hero *Kaleva* derives from the word *kalvis* ['smith']. Marija Gimbutas has also mentiones *Kalvis*, *Kalvaitis* and *Kalvelis* as the heavenly smith, a hero similar to Hephaestus, Vǫlundr and Ilmarinen (Gimbutas 1963: 202), but the Baltic etymology of *Kaleva* has been criticized (Junttila 2005: 55).[2] In southern regions of kalevalaic poetry, the smith is often referred to as *Viron seppä* ['smith of Estonia'], and identified as *Kallas*, *Kauko*, or *Kalervikko* in parallel lines. In more northern regions – Savo and Karelia – *Ilmarinen* and variations similar to it dominate. (Kuusi 1963: 153–157.)

Epithets of Ilmarinen in the corpus of *sampo*-poetry are, among others, *takoja iän ikuinen* ['craftsman, of age eternal'], *seppo selvä mies* ['smith, clever man'], *seppä Jumalan luoma* ['smith, created by God']. In addition, Ilmarinen is presented as a relative of Väinämöinen in some variants of the poems: *sepposeni veijoseni* ['my dear smith, my dear brother']. Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen are described as brothers in many poems. Joukahainen is also sometimes added to the list of brothers. (Kuusi 1949: 127–128.) Actual familial relations are not necessarily in question as this brotherhood could simply be a metaphorical expression indicating a close relationship – they

are like brothers. It is true that in *The Runo-Poem of Iro-Maiden* (*Iro-neidon runo*), a runo sung in Ladoga Karelia in particular, the main figure is said to give birth to three sons, who were named Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen and Joukahainen (*SKVR* VII_1 63–100). However, owing to this poem's age, the brotherhood appearing in it is not to be compared, for example, to that of the *sampo*-poems. According to Kuusi (1949: 128), Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen are presented as equal in the main redaction of *The Courtship Competition* in Viena Karelia, whereas in Finnish Väinämöinen is favoured, and in Ladoga and Olonec Karelia it is Ilmarinen.

Ilmarinen's Feats of Skill

Ilmarinen is mentioned as the liberator of the lights of heaven in some variants of poems in both Viena and in Ingria. For example:

Oi on seppo Ilmorini, ku on taivosen takonun, ilman kannen kalkutellun, oikein otavat tehnyn, tähen taivon taitavasta. Kuun peässit, päivän peässit yheksän lukun takoata.	Oh, there was the smith Ilmorini, who has forged heaven, hammered the vault of the sky, fashioned Ursa Major well, skillfully, the stars of heaven. You released the moon, released the sun, from behind nine locks.
Mantereen mattaala mies, itse seppoi Inkeroin, loi tuo tähet taivahasse, pani päivöin paistamaa ja kuun kumottammaa. (Setälä 1932: 142.)	The short man of the mainland, the smith Inkeroin himself, that one created the stars in heaven, placed the sun to shine and moon to glow.

From the perspective of epic, however, the most significant object made by Ilmarinen was the *sampo*. The poems provide a rather vague depiction of this feat, but the descriptions, however impoverished and inconsistent, have been researched in great detail (e.g. Setälä 1932, Harva 1943, Kuusi 1949). For the most part, they are in agreement concerning the manner in which the *sampo* is made, representing an act of forging, which naturally stands at the heart of the professional skills of a smith. Nonetheless, the materials for making the *sampo* bring to mind the folk poems' diverse symbols of impossibility: *yhen joukosen sulasta* ['from one feather of a swan'], *yhen värttinän murusta* ['from one piece of a spindle'], *yhen otrasen jyvästä* ['from one grain of barley']. (Kuusi 1949: 142–143.)

The portrayal of the *sampo*'s significance provided by the corpus of poems is as incoherent as its essence. The unifying feature of these portrayals is the material good which the *sampo* produces: grain, salt, money, and more abstractly all of the goodness, richness of the world. (Harva 1943: 27, Kuusi 1949: 145–146.) According to information recorded by Carl Axel Gottlund in Dalecarlia, the greater part of the sampo flew into the sea in the final

battle over its possession. If more of the *sampo* would have been retrieved to the earth, then "ois wilja tullut ilman kylwämätä" ['grain would have grown without sowing']. (Harva 1943: 14.) In the minds of the singers, the *sampo* was, overall, a complicated device made by the smith-hero and which provided material wealth to its possessor. As such, the *sampo* was associated with a form of utopian conception of what could be obtained through an ideal employment of the technology of those times.

The most common image of concrete representations of the *sampo* is as some sort of mill. A parallel with ancient Germanic epic is encountered here in the mill *Grotti*, which was said to grind into the world any material good desired by its possessor. It is also told that *Grotti*, like the *sampo*, was stolen from the north. In his study on the *sampo*, Uno Harva (1943) described Viktor Rydberg's conceptions of the mill *Grotti*. Rydberg, in his research on the narratives surrounding the mill *Grotti*, pointed out that an ancient representation of the cosmic rotation could stand behind this tradition. Like time itself, the starred heavens move at a steady even pace, as though driven by some type of machinery which is not dependent on any particular will. For its part, the mill was the most complicated device known among Germanic peoples for a very long time, and as such it was the pinnacle of technological accomplishment in that era. (Rydberg 1886–1889: 436–438, Harva 1943: 91–92.) In addition, a mill concretely ground material goods for people. Because of this, it was only natural to imagine the abstract *sampo* in the form of a mill-like device. Rydberg himself viewed the Germanic cosmic mill as connected to Finnish notions of the *sampo* and also to Indian conceptions of a cosmic rotation machine.

Alongside the crafting of the *sampo*, the forging of a golden maiden is the most central achievement of Ilmarinen in epic poems. In the corpus of *sampo*-poems, *The Forging of the Golden Maiden* (*Kultaneidon taonta*) is often adjoined to the end of versions of *The Courtship Competition*: the competing hero who does not acquire the maiden makes a woman of gold for himself as a consolation, yet the golden woman is not the same as a real one. Poems of West Ingria describe how Ilmarinen (or more commonly an unnamed smith) was upset because people teased him for living without a wife, and this was the reason that he made a golden maiden:

Siellä sepyttä soimattii,
Soimattii ja loimattii:
"Sepyt naisetta ellää,
Emännättä vanhenoo."
Sepyt suuttu ja vihastu,
Kuvas kullasta emännän,
Hopiasta vaali vaimon;
Jäi kolmee vaijaa:
Kieltä suuhu, mieltä päähä,
Silmii pään sissee.
(*SKVR* III$_1$ 645, 29–38.)

There the smith was reproached,
was reproached and abused:
"The smith lives without a woman,
becomes old without a mistress."
The smith grew upset, became angry,
formed a mistress from gold,
crafted a wife from silver;
three things remained lacking:
a tongue in her mouth, a mind in her head,
eyes inside her head.

In many variants of the poem, the creation of the golden maiden is described as a process which first produces additional extraordinary objects that inspire wonder and awe in others but do not satisfy Ilmarinen himself. In a text collected from Simana Sissonen, a stallion emerges from the fire as the result of blowing the bellows for three days, and Ilmarinen nonetheless shoves it back into the fire. The next attempt produces a boat, which Ilmarinen also returns to the fire, and on the third attempt, the result is what Ilmarinen desired: *Neito tungekse tulesta / punaposki lietsimestä* ['a maiden rushed from the fire / the red-cheeked one from the bellows']. (*SKVR* VII_1 505, 41–42.)

In some variants from Viena Karelia, such as in those sung by the renowned singers Arhippa and Miihkali Perttunen among others, Ilmarinen loses the courtship competition and, after returning home, makes a golden maiden for himself as a consolation:

Silloin seppo Ilmarinen	Then the smith Ilmarinen
Alla päin, pahoilla mielin	with lowered head, in a bad mood
Kotih tullessansa	when he came home
Keräsi kekosen puita,	gathered a pile of wood,
30:tä rekiä;	thirty sleighs;
(*SKVR* I_1 469, 340–344.)	

In some variants from Viena Karelia, the roles are reversed: Ilmarinen wins the daughter of Pohjola and Väinämöinen makes a golden maiden for himself (e.g. *SKVR* I_1 491).

Matti Kuusi viewed the poem about the golden maiden as associated with the old creation epic, both through its connections to other poems and through its style. However, it would not be the remnants of an old myth of the origin of human beings; Kuusi considered a more probable hypothesis to be that its roots are in a description of a cult statue. (Kuusi 1963: 159–161.)

The view presented by Mircea Eliade, that processing metal generally and that the melting and casting of metal in particular are associated with sexuality, becomes interesting when considering the forging of the golden maiden. On the basis of conceptions underlying some taboos, Eliade supposed that the melting of metal was considered to be a sacred sexual union, because of which the smith should invest all of his sexual energy into the melting event and abstain from other sexual contacts. The smith of the Bakitara tribe of Africa treats his anvil as his bride. (Eliade 1978a: 59–60.)

In Kalevala-meter poetry, sexuality is connected to the activities of the smith, although this is mainly in poems of the golden bride where it could however be a later addition, if Matti Kuusi was correct in his supposition concerning the original significance of the poem as an account of making a statue of a god.

The Character of Ilmarinen

Overall, the depiction of Ilmarinen as a person remains quite thin in comparison to that of Väinämöinen. In the poems, the only quotation commonly placed in the mouth of Ilmarinen is a warning to others not to make a woman out of gold for themselves. In folk poems, Ilmarinen is a secondary figure, a figure which helps others; he is a quiet, vaguely characterized technocrat, interested first and foremost in the accomplishment of his work and secondarily in obtaining a wife. Ilmarinen's purpose is to create the things which other figures of the epic poems require, and it was conceived as somehow possible that these objects could exist and be fashioned.

Kaarle Krohn came to a similar conclusion when he was studying the figure of Ilmarinen in folk poetry and in the various versions of *Kalevala*. In his view, Ilmarinen is handy and diligent, and is able to sink so deeply into his work that he could even lose sight of his own plans for courtship. Ilmarinen is a quiet figure. In *Kalevala*, Elias Lönnrot adapted him into a more talkative persona: of the seven incantations attributed to Ilmarinen in *Kalevala*, only two have precedents in oral epic. As a lover, Ilmarinen is impassionate. In *Kalevala*, Lönnrot added Ilmarinen to the section describing the anti-hero Kullervo and had Ilmarinen craft the golden maiden as a consolation for himself after Kullervo charmed beasts to tear apart his wife. However, in folksongs the crafting of the golden bride is primarily the reaction of the figure which loses the courtship competition. (Krohn 1903–1910: 336–340.)

According to Matti Kuusi, Ilmarinen appears as the central figure in the old mythic poems where poetic expression was most rigid. In the younger, core era of epic, the poetry became more lively in expression and deeper in its psychology, and the central figure became Väinämöinen, especially in Karelia and Savo (Kuusi 1963: 157, 161). This could provide an explanation for the paucity of characterizations of Ilmarinen: he is a culture hero who appears predominantly in archaic poems which describe the origins of things. In his diachronic theory of the relative age of the old epic poetry, Matti Kuusi has divided the material into five periods: the Pre-Finnic, Early Kalevala, Middle Kalevala, Medieval Kalevala and Late Kalevala Periods (Kuusi 1994: 50). In those poems, which according to Kuusi's dating system, belong to the Early Kalevala Period, there is not yet any place for dialogue or rich nuances of characterization. The only poem in which Ilmarinen appears that Kuusi attributes to the Middle Kalevala Period is *The Courtship Competition*, where Ilmarinen also has the role of a quiet accomplisher of courtship challenges.

The International Smith-Hero

In Classical mythology as well as in many others, the smith-hero is generally associated with fire and he is considered a lord of fire. Hephaestus and Vulcan were lords of fire of this sort. According to Eliade, Hephaestus is an

archaic figure, whose origin or roots remain unknown, and no explanation for this figure has been found in either pre-Hellenistic or Indo-European traditions. Hephaestus was above all the patron saint of different skills and techniques related to fire, but not a god of fire himself. (Eliade 1978b: 267.)

This description is equally appropriate to the figure of Ilmarinen in Finnish mythology. Kuusi views Ilmarinen as belonging "to the same family of divine smiths" as the *Rg Veda*'s Tvaštr, who fashioned many useful objects and even the first human beings, lame Hephaestus, who, according to Homer, made human-like golden maidens, and Germanic Vǫlundr, attributed with a corresponding feat. Among the Balts, the similar smith-hero was Kalevias, among Slavs, Svarog, and among Celts, Goban. (Kuusi 1963: 159.) The smith-god Goban or Goibniu served drinks to the gods as Hephaestus did, and repaired their damaged weapons after battle (Oosten 1985: 73, 122). The Near-Eastern smith-god Koshar-wa-Hasis of the Canaanites, helped Baal to defeat his adversary Yam by providing him with two clubs which he had made (Eliade 1978b: 154).

In ancient Mediterranean cultures, the skills of the smith and worship of the smith were closely connected to trade in the time when connections were wider and making metal objects was more commercial than simply being a function of self-sufficiency or oriented toward the direct exchange of goods (Silver 1985: 7–9). One of the important tasks of a smith was probably making money out of metal. Morris Silver asserts that words for "money" in many Mediterranean languages probably originally meant "head" (cf. Finnish *pääoma* ['capital'] which is a direct translation loan from an Indo-European language going back to Latin *caput, capitis* ['head']; Finnish *pää*). A smith's work, and coinage in particular, and producing "capital" through this, is reflected, for example, in Greek mythology in descriptions of gods being born from the heads of other gods. Pallas Athena was born from the head of Zeus, which according to the interpretations of Silver, could be explained by the fact that patrons of the cult of Zeus financially supported the new cult of Pallas Athena.

According to the myth, the smith-god Hephaestus opened Zeus's head with his double-headed axe. The double-headed axe was a symbol of the treasury or depository, and the smith made the money. According to Silver, the remains of metalworking smithies have been found near the ruins of many temples, hence there was a very close relationship between the cults of the gods and the economy, and from this perspective, the smith was a key individual. In the myths of the Scandinavians, the smith makes treasures for the king's treasury from the heads of the king's sons, actually as a revenge for enslaving of the smith. (Silver 1992: 29–33.) The position of the smith-god or smith-hero is slightly different in Classical mythology and its pantheon than in the mythology reflected through kalevalaic epic. The smith was not so much a lord of technology as a minter of money, and the money, for its part, was at the foundation of the maintenance of the temples and cults of the gods. The economic life and religion of Iron Age Finnish society did not develop such complex structures, although hoards have been found in the territories of present-day Finland and it is known that money was minted in Finland at the end of the prehistoric period (Talvio 1987). "Money"

(*markka*, *penningi*) appears in epic poems, but its age and origin in the poems could of course be drawn into question.

The Russian archaeologist B. A. Rybakov (1981: 530) sees a connection between the mythic concept of the sky-god and learning how to make things from metal, and among the ancestors of the Slavs, this relates to the era of the god Svarog. Above all, Rybakov invoked the information about the gods presented in old chronicles. The writer of one chronicle even connects Svarog and Greek Hephaestus, hence Svarog would have been some kind of heavenly smith-god. Svarog taught people to forge weapons. Rybakov's view is unusual and not very clearly argued. V. J. Mansikka (1922 [1967]: 397) considers the information about Svarog to be so limited that there are no grounds to approach Svarog as an ancient god common to all Slavs, but that Svarog is more likely to be a vestige of a belief legend describing the origin of fire.

Whatever the case, in the background of Rybakov's interpretation stands the natural idea that learning how to work metal was a technological revolution of such magnitude that it must have deeply impacted people's mental and mythic worldviews (Rybakov 1981: 539–540). Where once the craftsman was only able to arduously chip and polish a desired object little by little from a selected piece of stone, whether making the head of an axe, a knife or arrows, and the worker of clay shaped rather rough idols and jewellery, an entirely new technique suddenly made it possible to produce a hot and shining liquid which could be poured into a mould, cooling into a solid, unfinished form that, with forging, could produce objects clearly surpassing earlier achievements in their degree of ornamentation or value in practical applications (Salo 1984: 101). Rybakov (1981: 532) points out that the writer who explained the history of mythology in the chronicle made a leap from the Stone Age directly to the Iron Age because bronze is cast rather than forged. Rybakov finds additional arguments in support of his view that metal was used primarily for jewellery and chisels during the Bronze Age while sickles and knives continued to be produced from stone, and thus people of the Bronze Age continued – to a certain degree – living in the Stone Age.

The younger so-called stone axes of the Corded Ware (Battle Axe) Culture provide a concrete example of the corresponding mental revolution which followed from learning how to work metal, and learning how to work bronze in particular. These stone axes were made at a time when the art of casting bronze was already known and axes made using this technique were at least known somewhere, axes which were clearly technologically superior to stone axes and were admired and appreciated on that account. Accordingly, the seam of a casting mould was represented on the upper flat of the blade of stone axes so that their form would more greatly resemble the more appreciated exemplar. (Cf. Edgren 1984: 78, Salo 1984: 106–107.) This was done in spite of the fact that making the seam of the mould on the stone surface required a tremendous amount of additional work and in no way enhanced the practical qualities of the product.

Holy Iron

It is only natural that the art of metalworking became an object of mythologization, and that in the Iron Age, the smith became a new mythic hero with an ideal control over the new technology, a hero who was able to extend his achievements to cosmic proportions. It is therefore reasonable to argue that the poems about Ilmarinen are from the Iron Age, although in the question of their age, this still leaves a period of about one and a half thousand years. It is also possible to bring forward a number of reasons why smith-heroes such as Ilmarinen were associated with heaven. According to Mircea Eliade, the first iron used among men was originally from meteorites which fell from the sky. When Hernán Cortez asked Aztec chiefs about the origin of their iron, they pointed to heaven, whereas in a more ancient Sumerian text, iron is referred to using a sign-pair which means 'from heaven' and 'fire'. Later, people learned to cast iron ore and then the mythology related to iron received new features associated with the "matrix of Earth-Mother". (Eliade 1978b: 52–53.)

Eliade sees the ability to work metal as having brought about a fundamental change in mythologies on a general level. Earlier, the god of heaven had his naturally existing attributes, thunder and lightning. Once metalworking became known, the smith-hero emerged in a mythology as the figure which made the tools for the god of heaven. According to Eliade, a mythic *homo faber* can be seen in this phenomenon, along with the magical aura surrounding the hand-made tool. A smith thereby approaches divine models by forging weapons which are to some degree reminiscent of lightning and thunderstones. A "thunderstone" cast by the god of heaven was a stone arrowhead or axe blade, hence a tool of the era which preceded the Iron Age. On the mythic level, the significance of the art of fabrication and the skills of the craftsman demiurge, *homo faber*, were emphasized. (Eliade 1978a: 100–101.)

Among many ethnic groups, the sacred nature of iron emerges in the numerous mythic conceptions of the protective power of iron objects. Iron objects have belonged to the equipment of the Finno-Karelian ritual specialist and wielder of magic called a *tietäjä*: a *tietäjä* would bite the blade of a knife or mark a protective circle around his client with an axe. With reference to A. V. Rantasalo, Eliade briefly mentions iron as a protector of grains (Eliade 1978a: 204, Rantasalo 1919–1921), and he presents the information that many people in Africa consider iron objects to be magically powerful (Eliade 1978a: 92). At the same time, it is necessary to observe that – at least in kalevalaic mythology – the smith-hero Ilmarinen is not a *tietäjä*-figure, in contrast to the mythic figure Väinämöinen. According to Kaarle Krohn (1903–1910: 336), Ilmarinen accomplishes works with his skills which are as great as those accomplished by Väinämöinen with his knowledge. Whereas Väinämöinen provided the archetype of a master of mythic knowledge, Ilmarinen provided the archetype for a master of artful skill. Hot fire was essential in making iron and subsequently in the process of working iron, and the mythic origin of iron was in heaven. The first iron which people used also came from heaven, even if that does not

appear in kalevalaic mythology. Lightning striking from thunderclouds probably generated associations with heavenly fire quite naturally. Fire also has a celestial origin in the Finno-Karelian incantation, *The Origin of Fire* (*Tulen synty*). The one who gives birth to it, and thus the lord of the thunder-storm, is first identified as "Ilmarinen" or *Ilman Ukko* ['Old Man of the Air'] (noting that *Ukko* ['Old Man'] was also a conventional name for the thunder-god) and then as Väinämöinen in the parallel line, while some variants of the incantation also carry references to the mythic thunder-bird:

Iski tulta Ilman Ukko,	Ilman Ukko struck fire,
Välähytti Väinämöinen	Väinämöinen flashed
Kolmella kokon sulalla	With three feathers of an eagle
Kirjavilla kiärmehillä.	With colourful snakes.
(*SKVR* VII$_3$ 603b, 1–4.)	

Ilman Ukko often emerges in the place of Ilmarinen in incantations which describe the origin of fire, but Harva (1946: 95–96) considered Ilmarinen to be the primary figure in this position. Giving birth to fire is not the only event in which Ilmarinen is equivalent to a lord of fire. In some Ingrian variants of the poems, Ilmarinen ("Ismaro") appears as a figure which, according to Setälä, is referred to as the healer of injuries or illnesses referred to as "fire's wrath" (*tulen viha*):

Ei tuo olt joutsen joukko	That was not a flock of swans
eikä olt kallain parvi	and was not a school of fish
eikä olt olkimytty	and was not a bundle of straw,
eikä olt lehtimytty,	and was not a bundle of leaves,
istui itse Ismaroi	Ismaro himself sat
jääkattila käessä,	with an ice-kettle in his hand,
jääkääky kattilassa.	a chunk of ice in his kettle.
(Setälä 1932: 127.)	

On the other hand, Uno Harva (1946: 100) considers Ilmarinen's association with thunder to be occasional and that Ilmarinen cannot be considered the true thunder-god solely on the basis of an incantation because many of the attributes typical of a thunder-god are absent. Furthermore, Mircea Eliade emphasises that it is natural for a smith to be a "master of fire" who is able to change the state of material into that which he desires by using fire, and from the raw materials provided by nature, he can create something which is, qualitatively, completely new. In archaic societies, this led smiths to receive the same type of respect – as well as suspicion – as was regarded other users of fire: shamans, healers and wielders of magic. (Eliade 1978b: 54.)

The myth of the origin of iron is far more closely connected to the smith-hero and to the technological revolution instigated by the handling of metal than is the myth of the origin of fire. It is only natural that the origins of metals – and above all the origin of iron – became objects of mythologization. The myth of the origin of iron which is preserved in kalevalaic poetry appears as the introduction to the incantation used for

healing wounds caused by iron implements, and especially those caused by sharp tools. In this incantation, the description of the origin of iron is, ethnographically, quite natural: iron appears as the precipitated beads of ore which were collected in swamps, and especially from the footprints of animals:

Susi juoksi suota myöten,	A wolf ran through the swamp,
Karhu kangasta samoisi,	A bear roamed the heath,
Nousi suo suven jaloissa,	The swamp rose beneath the feet of the wolf,
Kangas karhun kämmenissä;	The heath in the palms of the bear;
Kasvo rautaset orahat,	Iron sprouts grew,
Suven suurilla jälillä.	In the wolf's great tracks.
(*SKVR* I_4 130, 1–6.)	

In the incantation *The Origin of Iron*, it is possible to observe references to sexuality which are relevant to the mythic connection of sexuality to the work of a smith as discussed above. The origin of iron is connected to young women:

Kun oli ennen neljä neittä,	When before there were four maidens,
Kolmet koitoo tytärtä,	were three daughters,
Lypsivät maille maitojaan,	They milked their milk onto the lands,
niitylle nisoksiaan,	Their breasts onto the meadows,
[….]	[….]
Et sinä silloin ollut suuri,	At that time you were not large,
Etkä suuri etkä pieni,	Neither large nor small,
Kun maitona makasit	When you were lying as milk
Nuoren neitosen nisissä,	In the breasts of a young maiden,
Kasvannaisen kainalossa.	In the armpit of one still growing.
(*SKVR* VII_3 499, 1–4, 17–21.)	

In many variants of the incantation, especially in the region of Viena, Ilmarinen is the mythic smith who prepares the first iron:

Se oli seppo Ilmarinen,	It was the smith Ilmarinen,
Takoja iän ikuinen	Forger, of age eternal
Sihen ahjoa asetti	Placed a forge there
Suven suurilla jälillä,	On the wolf's great footprints
Karhun kannan polkumilla;	On the tracks of the bear's heals;
Pani orjat lietsomahan.	Set slaves to work the bellows.
[….]	[….]
Katso alla ahjojansa:	Looked under the forges:
Rauta tungeksi tulesta,	Iron burst from the fire,
Siit'on rauta synnytelty.	From this was iron given birth.
(*SKVR* I_4 130, 7–12, 20–22.)	

Alongside Ilmarinen, Väinämöinen is also mentioned in variants of *The Origin of Iron*, his belt being presented as one source for the origin of iron:

Tuoll' on rauta synnytetty	There is iron given birth
Tuhatjatkossa tupessa,	In the thousand-fold sheath,
Vyöllä vanhan Väinämöisen.	On the belt of old Väinämöinen.
(*SKVR* $I_{4,1}$ 133, 7–9.)	

It can only be speculated in what sort of ritual context the myth of the origin of iron may have, at some point, been actualized, and how this myth was related to producing iron or to the ancient work of smiths. According to Eliade (1978b: 53), everywhere in the world, many different rituals related to mining iron ore have been found, among which belong demands of purity, fasting, meditation and prayers. Some analogical indications may offer fragmentary information concerning rituals for lighting fire. Simultaneously extinguishing all fires, lighting a new fire with friction, and spreading the fire from there to all others, all belonged to the ceremonies of many peoples. Although there is no direct proof, some type of similar ritual association probably provided an earlier context for the incantation which tells the origin of fire. (Kuusi 1963: 57–60.)

The Mythic Achievements of Technology

In mythic thinking, it is possible to distinguish two exceptionally profound technological achievements, masterpieces of the ideal smith-hero: the first is a device which produces various material goods with the capacity to liberate people from the drudgery heavy labour, and the second is the manufacture of an artificial human being. The latter emerged in a sort of competition with the gods of creation: a human being is itself the most complicated thing in the created world, and therefore the production of a human-like being would elevate the smith, with his hybrid masterpiece, to the level of a god for whom nothing is impossible.

Alongside the golden maiden as an artificial human being, the *sampo* presents a sort of ideal artifact of archaic human technology: it is a mystical device which produces material goods for people without drudgery – in other words, it liberates people from the burden of labour. The concrete appearance of the *sampo* has long been subject to discussion, with formulations put forward by, for example, E. N. Setälä (1932) and Matti Kuusi (1949) among others. The freshest explanation is that it was a statue which stood in town square (Klinge 1983). Whatever the possible concrete image of the *sampo* might be – the image of a god, a cult statue representing the world pillar, or whatever else – conceptions of the richness produced by the *sampo* as a sort of horn of plenty emerges very strongly in the folk poetry. Matti Kuusi presented various comments, both in prose and in verse, which informants associated with the end of the song describing the theft of the *sampo*, when the *sampo* sank to the bottom of the sea during the final battle. These comments share a common feature in the theme of a loss

of bountifulness: "because of that, the sea is rich and the earth poor" – the saltiness of the sea could also be explained as a consequence of the *sampo* lying at the bottom of the sea. (Kuusi 1968: 8–11.)

Risto Tapionkaski was the assistant of the artist Akseli Gallen-Kallela, and in the beginning of the 1920s, he provided a visual depiction of the vernacular *sampo*-techno-utopian conception (Setälä 1932: 189). Risto was from Viena Karelia, and known as Riiko Kallio according to his Karelian name, with the nickname "Smötkyn Riiko" (Tarkka 1999). His drawing of the *sampo* presents a sort of hybrid between the traditional and modern worlds: a geared wheel appears in the middle of it with smaller wheels around it, and at the bottom there is a hole from which the completed products can come out. (See Figure 1 in Tarkka, this volume.) Risto Tapionkaski was himself able to sing kalevalaic epic and he had been born into a society where the traditional preindustrial lifestyle and the epic poetry – its myths already becoming obscure – were still a reality, yet he had already had contact with the technology of modern society.

These same ideals or utopian conceptions of technology reflected in the machine which produces material prosperity and in the artificial human being continue their life in the newer prose-form tradition, united in *Könni's Hoe-Man* (*Könnin kuokkamies*) in the image of a sort of robot. The mechanical hoe-man reflects much newer technological thinking than the *sampo* and the golden maiden. The capacities of technology had already been completely de-mythologized, with mechanization at its foundations, where the windable spring was already known among the lay population as a way to store energy and as a source of energy which replaced the power of muscles, as well as the power of wind, which was a recognized technology familiar from sailing ships and windmills. In the 1800s, some mythic images or reflections thereof could merely be connected to the Könnis' smithy work as the Könnis revealed their superhuman skills as smiths. Still more recent reflections of vernacular techno-utopian conceptions are found in the inventers of different types of perpetual motion machines (Laaksonen 1991). A dream, corresponding to that which was held by the inventors of Könni's hoe-man, stands in the background of these developments – the dream of developing free energy for the production of material goods for the people.

The Könnis were famous craftsman of fine mechanisms or watchworks in the Pohjanmaa region, and it was popularly believed that they were masters of the best technologies which could be imaged in their time. Thus it was said that they created a machine which would replace the human being – Könni's hoe-man, which accomplished in a straightforward way the work for which it was mechanically programmed. (Simonsuuri 1950: 111–115.) Even here, the perfect outcome remained utopian. The golden maiden was not adequate as a wife and bed companion for a real person, nor was Könni's hoe-man able to turn unaided when it reached the end of the field. A pessimistic warning is attached to all narratives which tell of trying to manufacture an artificial man or woman: the virtual man or woman made by a human being is inevitably imperfect. The human features are achieved only in part, while those which are wanting actually leave the

accomplishment hazardous to its master. According to one variant of the story, Könni's hoe-man killed his master with a blow from his hoe, when the latter went to lie down at the end of the field, waiting for the hoe-man, and fell asleep there.

Beginning with Könni's hoe-man, two dreams are usually united in techno-utopian conceptions: one is that of a machine which accomplishes work, while the other is that of a human-like being, probably because the human being is considered the pinnacle of natural development, the most versatile, and not only capable of physical labour but also capable of mental tasks, thus the most effective being at accomplishing work. The manifestations of this techno-utopian concept are various robots which have been provided with ever more human features in modern movies, attributable for example to bio-technologies, so that – at their best – it becomes almost impossible to distinguish them from real people. In a way, the golden maiden is created again and again in these pop culture science-fiction adventures. In addition, the view that an artificial creation can never be equal to a real human being is often attached as a warning to these visions of robots and computers. One of the most well-known rebellions of a super-technology is found in the movie *2001, A Space Odyssey*, where the computer HAL decides to eliminate the crew in the middle of their journey because they are imperfect beings which can threaten the success of the whole research mission.

In principle, we are still living in the Iron Age, even if our technology is on a totally different level than when *The Origin of Iron* was, in its time, living ritual poetry. Respect mingled with fear of the possibilities of technology has been preserved: on the one hand, we are dreaming of incomparable achievements, and on the other we are afraid of the dangers concealed in those achievements because we have the suspicion that such products of superhuman technology will not be under human control.

Translated by Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 Finland Proper (Varsinais-Suomi) is the province on southwest tip of present-day Finland; Satakunta is the adjacent province to the north along the coast. – *Editor's note.*

2 The author is indebted to Frog for the additional information concerning *Kaleva* and *Kalvis*.

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Frog

Confluence, Continuity and Change in the Evolution of Mythology

The Case of the Finno-Karelian Sampo-Cycle*

The so-called "Sampo-Cycle"[1] is a kalevalaic epic surrounding the mysterious object called a *sampo*. The riddle of the *sampo*'s identity and significance has been a nexus of interpretation and debate in the history of research on Finno-Karelian mythologies (see e.g. Setälä 1932, Kuusi 1949, both Tarkka and Anttonen, this volume). Rather than concentrating on this object, the present study focuses on the narrative material and cultural figures surrounding it in order to render a broad working model of the historical background and significance of different aspects of this cycle in long-term perspective. This study focus on the three core narrative sequences or songs of the Sampo-Cycle: *The Song of Creation* (*Luomisruno*), *The Forging of the Sampo* (*Sammon taonta*), and *The Theft of the Sampo* (*Sammon ryöstö*).[2] In the first of these, mythic singer and practitioner of magic Väinämöinen is the sole, undisputed demiurge and central figure. In the last, Väinämöinen is also generally uncontested as the main figure while the mythic smith Ilmarinen joins Väinämöinen's sea-raid expedition, often with a third figure. The second narrative sequence, describing the creation of the mysterious *sampo*, distributes action between Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, but as will be discussed below, the nature of agency attributed to each figure differs in significant respects. Central concerns in discussion are *a*) the Sampo-Cycle's role in constructing the identities and relationships of mythic figures, *b*) how to approach contrasts between these traditions and a Finno-Ugric mythological heritage, *c*) the significance of parallels to

* I would like to thank Academician Anna-Leena Siikala, Professor Peter Buchholz and Eila Stepanova for their insightful comments and discussions in the process of developing this paper. I would also like to thank Lauri Harvilahti and Janne Saarikivi whose challenging questions and valuable observations at conferences and seminars significantly impacted its development. Building on my doctoral dissertation research (Frog 2010a), this article presents a survey of current findings from my post-doctoral research-project, "The Generation of Myth in a Confluence of Cultures: Perspectives on the Sampo-Cycle in Kalevalaic Poetry" (2009–present), made possible by grants from the Kone Foundation and the Finnish Cultural Foundation. Some sections overlap with articles that have different foci (Frog 2012a, 2012c).

Germanic mythological traditions, and *d*) what evidence of historical change or development in mythological narratives and mythic figures informs us about the social processes that gave rise to them in earlier periods.

This is a corpus-based study that considers what the extant corpus can inform us about earlier forms and backgrounds of this cycle and the figures that inhabit it in long-term comparative perspective. The dynamic nature of this cycle allowed it to integrate other narratives – especially material associated with the central figure Väinämöinen on the sailing adventure of the third part of the cycle (which describes a sea-raid). These can easily give an exaggerated impression of variation in the corpus although they are not necessarily significant to the semantics of the Sampo-Cycle whole (see Frog 2012b: 45–46). Concentration on the historical background of the Sampo-Cycle leaves these variations and their relation to particular local forms outside of discussion. Attention will be given to variation across broad regions of the tradition while specific and more local variation is left in the background owing to limitations of space. The overall focus of the present study is on the historical stratification of impacts on the mythological tradition, how these relate to cultural contacts and what they inform us about social processes in prehistory. This is a contribution to what has become the mythic discourse of academia (cf. Anttonen, this volume), returning to old questions with new understandings of traditions in socio-historical processes.

The methodological strategy employed is what I refer to as the Parallax Approach (Frog 2012b). Significant methodological differences distinguish this study from the comparative studies that characterized historical research on traditions through much of the 20th century. This needs to be highlighted immediately because the problems of earlier uses of comparative methods and their reconstructivist priorities have coloured how studies in the present are received. The present approach is developed on a usage-based approach to folklore and the semiotics of culture (see Frog 2010a). It does *not* isolate traditions from social processes. It approaches what can (and cannot) be said about earlier forms of a tradition through abstractions and probabilities rather than concrete reconstructions. It also considers a narrative tradition in terms of constellations of figures, images, motifs and so forth, all of which embody meaningfulness and meaning-potential in contemporary cultural semiotic environments and may have histories extending far beyond the particular context. Consequently, the historical development of a narrative and the elements of which it is constituted cannot be approached in isolation, and the approach to a particular narrative is situated on a long-term continuum that extends far beyond the particular narrative to consider the background of its elements and their possible or probable meaning-potential in semiotic environments where the tradition emerged. The development of the continuum model is oriented to identifying and outlining indicators of historical developments in and across traditions through comparative data. Variation between established forms of a tradition are not simply regarded as data for investigating a common antecedent: these, and the emergence of a tradition itself, are approached as outcomes of historical processes of

social negotiation through mythic discourse, and therefore simultaneously indicators of those processes.

The development of a continuum model characterizes the structure of presentation. Proto-Uralic (PU) and Proto-Finno-Ugric (PFU) provide the earliest linguistic-cultural eras for which generalizations can be made with a reasonable degree of probability concerning the mythology and mythological thinking. Although what can be said of this era is both limited and highly abstract, it presents an essential frame of reference for considering the backgrounds and historical transformations underlying the world-creation narrative, the figure of the smith Ilmarinen, and the discontinuity between the shamanism connected to this linguistic-cultural heritage and the type of ritual specialist of which Väinämöinen emerged as the cultural model. Early impacts of Indo-Iranian contacts will then be introduced. It is from these contacts that the term *sampo* etymologically derives. The example illustrates problems in perspectives on such remote periods while simultaneously highlighting the degree of historical stratification in the mythology. Attention then turns to the introduction of iron-working technologies, which became connected to the identity of the mythic smith and creation of the *sampo*. This example provides perspectives on the relevance of cultural contacts to mythological narrative traditions in the Circum-Baltic as well as offering a number of indicators of extreme contrasts (and therefore changes) between dominant mythological models and traditions of that time and those that characterize the Sampo-Cycle. The perspectives on these earlier stages in Finnic cultural mythologies will then provide an essential background and context for developing comparative perspectives when situating the Sampo-Cycle in relation to socio-historical processes connected with a new technology of magical practice and associated variety of ritual specialist.

Investigations, Past and Present

The Sampo-Cycle was communicated in the verbally conservative poetic system of kalevalaic poetry as a mythological epic narrative. Conventions of the genre complemented the conservatism of stanza-like compositional units of these poems as well as the degree to which their conventional organization was regarded as significant. The Sampo-Cycle was therefore not simply a "narrative" or "story"; it was a narrative with a socially established textual form – it was a *textual entity* (Frog 2011b). Examples and fragments of this textual entity were documented from roughly the White Sea to the southern shores of the Gulf of Finland, and from Lake Onega to central Sweden. The most extensive study of the Sampo-Cycle to date is Matti Kuusi's (1949) doctoral dissertation, treating 41,762 lines of verse from 744 poems and fragments, documented primarily in Karelia, when Finland was a Grand Duchy of the Russian empire (1809–1917).[3]

Early investigations of the history of the Sampo-Cycle were made within the framework of the Historical-Geographic Method or its derivatives. Originally based on a mechanized manuscript stemma model, these studies accumulated texts with a mono-directional goal of sifting "mistakes" and

"interpolations" form variants and redactions in order to reconstruct an original form (e.g. Krohn 1918, 1926, 1971; see also Hautala 1969). A central problem with these approaches is in the underlying conception of oral traditions and how they function. Traditions were treated as the voice of *das Volk*, dismissing the role of the individual, and textual products were considered identical to the tradition. On the one hand, the identification of text *as* tradition and tradition *as* the voice of an ethnos eliminated the need to consider variation in performance (which merely reflected imperfections in the text). On the other hand, the identification of traditions as ideal heritage-objects, aloof from social processes, eliminated the need to consider the social negotiation of traditions through discourse. Recovering vanishing heritage-objects from the corruption of peasant communities was a noble cause of Romanticism, guided by the star of nationalism, and the Historical-Geographic Method – which may now seem as primitive and superstitious as the use of leeches in medicine – was both rational and scientific in its day.

The rigorous early form of the Historical-Geographic Method evolved in the so-called Finnish School. Greater account was taken of the role of the individual in the transmission and evolution of oral traditions, and the text-based emphasis of earlier research was mitigated by greater concern for typological analysis (e.g. Harva 1943, Kuusi 1949). Investigations of the history of motifs extended to cross-cultural comparative studies of vast or even global proportions (e.g. Harva 1923, Haavio 1967). Such broad comparative typological comparisons were problematized by a failure to recognize the significance of cultural contexts on the one hand, and lower standards of source-criticism on the other. In extreme cases, virtually any example could be selectively taken up and compared for the creative construction of a narrative describing relationships between them.[4] At the same time, investigations into the history of individual poems as socially circulating "texts" were held back by foundations for approaching the transmission of traditions in Historical-Geographic models and associated ideologies (e.g. Hautala 1945). A general shift in research emphasis to social and cultural contexts turned attention to precisely these problems. This led to new models for approaching text production and transmission such as Oral-Formulaic Theory (on which see Foley 1988). Ironically, these developments were associated with general shifts from diachronic investigation to the study of synchronic processes in cultural practice, and also from focus on continuity to a concentration on variation, ranges of use, the intersection of multiple genres and cultural competences in specific individuals, meaning-generation and communication (on these shifts in paradigm, see e.g. Honko 2000). This occurred precisely as Matti Kuusi (1963) was advocating an innovative and dynamic (if text-based) approach to kalevalaic epic according to long-term continuum models that shifted attention from "origins" to the historical stratification and transformations of mythological and epic poetry. Criticisms brought against methodologies of the Finnish School were therefore accompanied by a turn away from the history of traditions and the nature and significance of long-term continuities: those questions were no longer interesting. Consequently,

earlier retrospective methods and methodologies were not revised and adapted in response to criticisms, nor were new, viable methods developed. Thus for half a century, remarkably little has been done in the area of diachronic study of kalevalaic poetry, and almost nothing on the Sampo-Cycle.[5]

This is not to say that earlier studies necessarily arrived at false conclusions and lack any value (cf. Siikala 2002b: 27). Their findings must, however, be reassessed owing to problems in their methodologies, their presuppositions about folklore transmission, and their sometimes low source-critical standards. In some cases, ideological agendas may also have shaped interpretations in a more aggressive construction of cultural heritage. The area has become challenging to reopen. Investigations of this type have been largely left behind and existing studies have become outdated, resulting in an unbalanced infrastructure for new inquiries.

Seminal work has, however, been done by Anna-Leena Siikala (1992, 2002a). Siikala turned from text-objects to, on the one hand, the mythic images and motifs – the semiotic building-blocks of "texts" – circulating as meaningful elements in diverse and potentially changing applications, and on the other hand, to patterns of mythological thinking – the use of modelling systems in conceptualizing and interacting with the world. Siikala highlights that the constituents of traditions of kalevalaic mythology have diverse roots, some extending to a Finno-Ugric heritage while others derived from different cultures, yet traditions, whether inherited or borrowed, nevertheless always emerge in a present filtered through the semiotics and cognitive models of the contemporary culture in era after era throughout their history. Siikala's approach and study of kalevalaic mythology are a point of departure for the present investigation.

Siikala's approach was successful because it was developed on current understandings of how traditions and mythic discourse functions. The usage-based, social-semiotic approach to traditions employed here follows John Miles Foley's (1995: *passim.*) approach to folklore "texts" as products of expression generated and interpreted in relation to tradition as an "enabling referent". "Tradition" therefore exists in the subjective understandings of individuals developed in real-time social environments, and its value and roles as a referent are negotiated in the intersubjective spaces of individuals in interaction. Tradition infuses action and expression with meaningfulness and loads it with valuations, implications, associations and rhetorical force (Foley 1991, 1995). In social practice, the effectiveness of a referent is dependent on its recognisability. The subjective nature of understanding coupled with the condition of recognisability leads to the maintenance of traditions as socially negotiated semiotic realities of intersubjective space. The historical maintenance of semiotic realities stands at the intersection of their vitality, centrality and frequency of use. In analysis, these social realities are addressed practically as hypothetical abstractions (Lotman 1990: 218; cf. Dégh & Vázsonyi 1975: 207). Although an abstract model may fairly accurately reflect a social reality on the level of a small-group community within a time-frame of a single generation, as this scope is expanded across synchronic or diachronic communities, the abstraction is

necessarily inclined to minimize variation through broader generalizations and its value gradually shifts from a frame of reference for individual expressions and manifestations of texts to variation in the tradition (as referent) across synchronic or diachronic communities (see also e.g. Bradley 2012), as is the concern here.

Siikala (2002a) not only turned away from concrete reconstructions to more abstract and flexible modelling of continuities and variation, she also attempted to situate these in much broader patterns within a culture and develop systemic models that would not be dependent on any one case. This can be compared to models in historical linguistics that have evolved highly complex and detailed long-term models for the historical development in language and phonetics. These models in linguistics are founded on the lateral correlation of broad ranges of examples in which each may itself be only a probability but the overall pattern emerges as reliable, and participation in that pattern complements the probability of the individual examples. In broader approaches to cultural semiotics, Lauri Harvilahti's (2003: 90–115) "ethnocultral substratum" can be employed as a tool to describe the traditions and cultural semiotics characteristic of cultural competence within a historical "layer" on a historical continuum model (see further Frog 2011c). The implementation of this tool will be illustrated in the following discussion.

Proto-Uralic and Proto-Finno-Ugric Mythology

The earliest distinguishable ethnocultural substrata are those of the Proto-Uralic (PU) and Proto-Finno-Ugric (PFU) linguistic-cultural periods. PU mythology most probably maintained a dualistic system of supreme sky-god and his antithesis, although the name and/or identity of the antithesis appears to have been subject to historical renewal more frequently than that of the sky-god (Ajkhenvald et al. 1989: 156–157). Following a basic pattern of archaic strata of the world's mythologies (Eliade 1958: 38–111), the sky-god was identified with a term for "sky, heaven; weather". What is exceptional is the diversity of these theonyms across Uralic languages which nonetheless carry a vernacular nominal capacity for "sky, heaven; weather". Károly Rédei (1996: 283–284) outlines five central examples:

1. The designation **nu-mɜ* ['the above, heaven, god' = **nu* 'upper, supreme' + the derivational suffix **-mɜ*], maintained in Samoyedic languages, has been reconstructed for PU, although it is unclear whether it was a primary designation for the sky-god at that time (Rédei 1986–1988: 308–309; cf. Sutrop 2003: 44–49).
2. **Ilma* is attested as a theonym in Khanty, Komi, Udmurt and the Finnic languages (> Sámi), while reflexes of the noun **ilma* are found in all major families of Finno-Ugric (FU) languages except Volgic (addressed below) (Rédei 1986–1988: 81). The noun **ilma* belongs unambiguously to the PFU lexicon; the PFU theonym **Ilma* can be reasonably reconstructed.
3. Ob-Ugric **tōrəm* is potentially a loan from an Altaic language.[6]

4. Proto-Finnic (PF) and Proto-Volgic (PV) **juma* is considered a loan from an Indo-Iranian language (*SKES*: 122, Koivulehto 1999: 228; cf. Anttonen, this volume).
5. Rédei's fifth example (*kwaź*) is exclusive to Udmurt, and its origins are unknown.

The terms for the sky-god and the sky are identical except in Finnic languages and cases of Finnic influence, as discussed below. The etymologies of **tōrəm* and **juma* are not uncontested,[7] but whatever their origins, the identification of each term with the supreme sky-god led to the extension of its semantic fields to include the phenomenon of the "sky" at an early period.[8] I have described this in terms of a hypothesis of semantic correlation: the conceptual schema attached to the sky-god included an identification with the phenomenon of the sky. Put another way, the god was not called "sky", but rather the sky was identified with the god even when that god's name was adapted from another culture. So long as the schema was maintained, the lexical item designating the sky-god expanded its semantic field to include the phenomenon of the sky.[9] As a phenomenon common to all discernable historical periods of Uralic cultures, it can be reasonably identified with the PU linguistic-cultural era. Accordingly, the reliable reconstruction of **ilma* in PFU provides evidence of **Ilma* as the PFU theonym of the corresponding god even where this figure was later displaced by, for example, **Tōrəm* or **Juma*. (See further Frog 2012a.) If **Ilma* is a development characterizing the PFU ethnocultural substratum (potentially displacing e.g. PU **Numɜ*), then **Ilma* would have been introduced as the designation for the god and expanded its semantic field to the phenomenon of the sky. This would correspond to later developments in FU mythologies, against which the reverse development (**ilma* ['sky'] > **Ilma*) seems unlikely.

Vladimir Napolskikh (1989, this volume) shows that PU most probably maintained a bird-diver world-creation myth (cf. Krohn 1885), which may have Palaeolithic roots in a widespread narrative of a competition between diver-animals, of which the last succeeds. The proposed dualist structure of the PU diving competition, identifying the animals with a chthonic bird (loon) and successful celestial bird (duck), parallels the dualist schema of the sky-god and his antithesis. It remains unclear when the diving birds became directly identified with these figures. Napolskikh observes a historical process of development in which the birds are identified with shape-changing anthropomorphic beings, and later the anthropomorphic figures accomplish their roles without bird-transformations. Finno-Ugric cultures generally exhibit only a single diver while the celestial figure functions through the chthonic diver (Napolskikh 1989: 106; cf. Eliade 1958: 74). It is uncertain whether this development characterizes the PFU ethnocultural substratum and the emergence of **Ilma*.

A form of Central and Northern Eurasian shamanism, or "classic" shamanism (Siikala 1978: 14–15) was most probably part of the PU heritage (cf. Hultkrantz 2001, Siikala 2002c). PFU **nojta* appears to have designated a type of shaman who entered unconscious trance-states (Haavio 1967: 313–314, Rédei 1986–1988: 307–308). Traditions of "classic" shamanism

survived in large isoglosses inclusive of multiple linguistic-cultural groups (cf. Siikala 1978), while linguistic and folkloric evidence attests to its earlier centrality in even the most peripheral Uralic cultures (Hoppál 1999, Siikala 2002a, 2002c). This suggests that a factor in the persistence of shamanism was cultural contact and/or the presence and the positive significance of shamanism in adjacent cultures,[10] in addition to continuities in social structures and means of livelihood (Siikala, this volume). Correspondingly, the magical and ritual practices of adjacent cultures were probable factors in the disappearance of shamanism elsewhere, as seems to have been the case in Finnic cultures (Siikala 2002a).

Shamanism is not itself a religion or belief system, but rather "a *complex of phenomena* which occur together in a characteristic and meaningful combination" (Vajda 1959: 476; cf. Hultkrantz 1973: 36–37). Nonetheless, the ritual specialist presents an authority in a position to shape the belief system on the level of small groups (Siikala 1978: 13). The "complex of phenomena" identified with shamanism is dependent on certain cognitive and cosmological models that allow certain broad generalizations. Their presence in PU presumes: *a*) a vertically stratified cosmology with an upper celestial sphere or spheres connected by the *axis mundi* – probably a pillar-image[11] – and lower chthonic sphere or spheres connected by a hole or water-barrier; *b*) the conception of a separable soul; and *c*) the ability of the ritual specialist and/or his spirit-helpers to journey between these worlds.[12] Mircea Eliade (1964: 505–507) argues for the primacy of the journey to the celestial sphere with a conceptual foundation "in a celestial Supreme Being with whom it was possible to have direct relations by ascending into the sky" (Eliade 1964: 507; cf. Eliade 1958: 104–108). If correct, this implies that the PU sky-god and subsequently PFU **Ilma* were central to the contemporary institution of shamanism, and that at least some type (e.g. PFU **nojta*) or types of specialist gained direct access to this figure on soul-journeys via the *axis mundi*.

Indo-Iranian Ethnocultural Substrata

Finnic languages exhibit a rich substratum or substrata of influence from an Indo-Iranian culture or cultures during the Bronze Age or earlier (Carpelan & Parpola 2001). Comparative investigation is complicated by the possibility that the reflected branch of Indo-Iranian could be extinct (Helimski 1997). These Indo-Iranian influences have been sifted through so many subsequent ethnocultural substrata that their impacts can only be extrapolated as probabilities, and predominantly through etymological data. One example is PF/PV **juma* ['god, sky'], addressed above, found in Finnic (> Sámi and possibly Komi) and Volgic languages. **Juma* differs from **Ilma* in its ability to function as a common noun for "god". The loan suggests a reconceptualization of the phenomenon "god" or changes in associated ritual/narrative activity. **Juma* appears paralleled by PF/PV **vaśara* ['hammer'/'axe'] < Indo-Iranian **vaźra* (Joki 1973: 339, Rédei 1986–1988: 815), the term for the lightning-weapon of the dragon-slaying

god (Watkins 1995: 332, 408–414, West 2007: 251). This mythic object is associated with metal-casting technologies (Watkins 1995: 435–436; cf. Salo 1990: 136–140). The new term may reflect reconceptualizations of lightning (Salo 2006: 75–76) or of the sky-god's role as a striker of "devils" with lightning in relation to IE models (Valk 1996: 20; cf. Valk, this volume).

Potential relationships of mythological narrative material are more obscure and problematic. In such an early stratum, comparative evidence only suggests a narrative motif or system of elements that provide a core for a narrative rather than a narrative *per se*. For example, an areal subgroup of Finno-Ugric bird-diver creation myths maintain a world-egg motif accounting for the origin of the celestial lights (and sometimes earth and heaven). Pentti Aalto (1987 [1975]: 85–86) observes from the perspective of Indo-Iranian studies that "the only [traditions] in which the World Egg is connected with a bird" are those in of Indo-Iranian and Finno-Ugric cultures. The example is relevant because the world-egg motif is central in Finnic traditions and also encountered in Sámi and Komi, with traces in Mordvin, likely spread through a language and dialect continuum rather than being rooted in a common linguistic period. (Napolskikh 1989: 106.) Some form of historical isogloss related to cross-cultural contacts is implied. Without parallels in Baltic or Germanic traditions, an Indo-Iranian culture is a strong candidate for its entry into FU cultures (cf. Haavio 1952: 46–63, Kuusi 1956: 77–80). This would be consistent with the direction of cultural influence in linguistic, archaeological and other data (cf. Aalto 1987 [1975], Koivulehto 1999, Carpelan & Parpola 2001). Such evidence is cumulative in revealing general trends as a context for the consideration of specific examples (cf. Aalto 1987 [1975]: 97–98). However, the background of the motif in Indo-Iranian traditions remains obscure rather than clearly being its source. Antti Lahelma (2008: 155–157, 2010: 142–145) has identified a Stone Age petroglyph depiction of this motif on Lake Onega. This attests to an early period of establishment in the north, yet simultaneously complicates matters because the representation may antedate Indo-Iranian contacts and cannot even be unambiguously identified as deriving from an Uralic language group (cf. Carpelan 2001, Aikio 2004). The multicultural isogloss could have extended beyond FU and IE cultures and evidence of additional relevant mythologies are simply lacking.

This problem of motifs combines with a relevant potential loan-complex of **taiwas–*sampas*: PF **taiwas* ['sky, heaven, vault of heaven'] < Indo-Iranian **daivas*; Indo-Iranian **stambhas* or **skambhas* ['that which supports; (world) pillar'][13] > PF **sampas* ['(world) pillar'][14] > *sammas* > *sampo*. Unlike **juma* and the potential PF/PV **juma–*vaśara* loan complex, **taiwas* and **sampas* are only attested in Finnic languages and may be a separate, possibly later development. Two loanwords from the same language for interrelated essential elements of a cosmological model suggest a loan-complex. Mythic images and concepts of both the world pillar / *axis mundi* and vault of heaven were likely already established in PU (cf. Hoppál 2010: 29). The assimilation of these terms implies the displacement of vernacular terms for the revision of those concepts or narratives associated with them.

The etymology of **taiwas* suggests that this revision may have been quite

radical. Indo-Iranian **daivas* is a reflex of PIE **deiwós* [‘god’] suggesting PF **taiwas* emerged with a conception of the vault of heaven as a mythic being. M. L. West (2007: 166–167) points out that the semantics of the PF **taiwas* suggest that the reflex of PIE **Dyéus* [‘Supreme God, Sky’] in the source language must have been replaced by reflexes of its adjectival derivative **deiwós* [‘god, one of the sky’]. This same process also occurred in Baltic and Germanic languages – i.e. the theonym “Sky(-God)” became “(Sky-)God” – and reflexes of PIE **Dyéus* vanished as both theonym and common noun. The Indo-Iranian culture reflected in the PF loan appears to be one of a small group of IE languages forming an isogloss of this shift in theonyms near and around the Baltic Sea (Frog 2012a). In Volgic languages, the nominal term **juma* [‘god, sky’] also superseded both the inherited theonym **Ilma* and (surprisingly) as in the IE languages, also eclipsed the common PV noun **ilma*. This suggests that the isogloss of the displacement of an inherited theonym and noun “Sky”/“sky” by a common noun for “god” was not restricted in IE cultures. Linguistic evidence alone reflects social processes that spread through a language and dialect continuum, significantly impacting vernacular mythologies to the degree that the designation of the central god changed. Accordingly, the PF loan more likely reflects a theonym **Daivas* for the supreme sky-god paralleling Baltic and Germanic developments rather than a common noun **daivas* [‘god, one of the sky’]. This increases the probability that the loan reflects a conception of the vault of heaven as a mythic being, and potentially a proper name of that being – **Taiwas*.

At the same time, PF **ilma* [‘air, weather, world’] maintained a distinct semantic field from PF **taiwas*. This suggests that a hypothetical **Taiwas* was not identical to **Ilma* or that these became clearly distinguished as a social process. The intersection of the mythological lexicon and motifs remains ambiguous. This could suggest a cosmological myth of crafting the world from a murdered anthropomorphic being, a motif common to Indo-European cultures (Lincoln 1975, 1986: 1–64, West 2007: 356–359). It could also reflect a myth disambiguating the sky as a phenomenal mythic being from the central god, much as Greek Ouranos [‘Sky’] is distinguished from Zeus < **Dyéus* [‘Sky, Supreme God’], observing that FU mythological lexicons exhibit a pattern of adapting and villainizing the theonym of a foreign competing god for the adversary of the vernacular sky-god (Ajkhenvald et al. 1989: 157). This could produce a **Daivas* > **Taiwas* ≠ **Ilma* loan. The underlying significance of these processes remains unclear and identifying this linguistic evidence with narrative motifs remains speculation, but it does not reduce the probability that there *were* changes in motifs and conceptual models differentiating **taiwas*–**sampas* myths from inherited PFU models.

Pictures of the PFU linguistic-cultural substratum or PIE substratum are far more developed than the Indo-Iranian strata touched on here precisely because social and historical factors led relatively small linguistic-cultural groups to produce exceptionally large families of languages manifested in numerous and widespread cultures that can all be compared. By comparison, the Finnic language family is quite small and the matrix of comparative

material for its earlier periods is at an intersection of the PFU heritage and cross-cultural contacts. Evidence of cultural contacts is then situated rather ambiguously on a relative chronology. Although certain complexes seem probable (e.g. **taiwas–*sampas*), it is not clear that all influences from early contacts were interrelated (cf. **juma–*vaśara*). More significantly, contact does not emerge as a binary relationship between only two cultures. Instead, it seems to have transpired in potentially vast networks of language and dialect communities, quite probably over an extended historical process. The comparison of many diverse cultures involved in these processes allows a more developed picture to emerge. Even if the chronology remains relative and the significance of developments remains rather ambiguous, this evidence offers insights into the scope and magnitude of transformative impacts on mythologies through cultural contacts. It is evident that PF cultures were affected by these processes. Like abstracted perspectives on PU and PFU traditions, the recognition of early transformative impacts to the mythology, however broad and general the perspectives, provides an essential frame of reference in developing a long-term continuum model.

The Disambiguation of the Sky-God from the Sky

A bit of lexical archaeology is now required concerning the PF development **Ilma* > **Ilma-r*(*i*).[15] The derivational suffix *-r*(*i*) emerged in PF to characterize a person or being associated with the noun or verb that it modifies.[16] This development disambiguated the phenomenon **ilma* ['sky'] from the theonym **Ilma-r*(*i*) ['Sky-Being'] on the lexical level. PF **juma* received a corresponding derivational suffix *-l*(*a*) yielding *juma-l*(*a*). Although this suffix is not identical to *-r*(*i*), it succeeds in disambiguating the term **juma-l*(*a*) from **juma*. The developments of PF **Ilma* ['Sky'] > PF **Ilma-ri* ['Sky-Being'] and > PF **ilma* ['sky, weather, world'], and of **Ilma*'s synonym PF **juma* ['god, sky'] > PF **juma-l*(*a*) ['god, magically powerful being'] and > PF **juma* ['sky, complexion'], appear to be a coordinated semantic development to disambiguate the supernatural being "Sky" / "(Sky-)God" from the phenomenon "sky" / "sky(-god)". This breaks from the hypothesis of semantic correlation presented above in a radical and potentially aggressive revision of conceptions of the relationship between "god" and "sky".

The suffix *-l*(*a*), commonly used for location in modern Finnic languages, was generative in forming derivative adjectives, possibly as a derivational diminutive (Hakulinen 1961: 119–120, and note 16 above),[17] producing the nominal adjective or derivational diminutive *juma-l*(*a*) ['divine one; one of the sky']. This development corresponds semantically to the relationship between PIE **Dyéus* ['Sky'] and its derivative nominal adjective **deiwós* ['god; one of the sky']. The development of **Ilma* > **Ilma-ri* and **juma* > **juma-l*(*a*) may therefore participate in the broad cross-cultural pattern introduced above: **Dyéus*-reflex → **Deiwós*-reflex ['God, Supreme Sky-God']. Whereas Volgic languages may participate in the same phenomenon on the basis of lexical semantics (replacing the theonym with

a common noun), the Finnic languages accomplished this process according to a morphological model (replacing the theonym/noun with a derivational nominal adjective).

Disambiguated **Ilma-ri* was significant enough for the theonym to be adapted into other FU languages. The Sámi loan *Ilmari* > *Ilmaris* is poorly attested and appears adapted potentially as the antithesis of the dominant sky-god (cf. ***Taiwas* above) (Rydving 2010: 48, 95; cf. Haavio 1967: 130–132). The theonymic model became established on a comprehensive basis in Udmurt, where *Ilmar* (one early documented example) appears to have been assimilated by the vernacular theonym **In*/**Inm-* (cognate with Komi *Jen*/*Jenm-*), becoming *Inmar*.[18] The affix *-r*(*i*) did not carry independent semantic value in Udmurt (cf. Uotila 1942: 283). Rather than assuming the value "Sky-Being", it entered as the name of the dominant sky-god and in accordance with the hypothesis of semantic correlation, expanded its semantic field to the phenomenon of the sky: *Inmar* ['Sky(-God)'] > *inmar* ['sky'] (cf. Harva 1946: 103, Rédei 1986–1988: 81). Martti Räsänen (1956: 105) has also brought forward evidence that *Ilmar*(*i*) was borrowed into Čuvaš (a Turkic language of the Volga region), although the underlying identity is completely obscure. Together, this evidence not only suggests that the development **Ilma* > **Ilma-ri* was significant for PF cultures, but also that **Ilma-ri*'s prominence was carried cross-culturally through language and dialect communities as a historical process that impacted mythologies in diverse and widespread cultures.

Iron and the Smith-God

The introduction of iron-working technologies (not just products) into Finnic cultural areas was "a technological quantum leap" (Salo 2006: 31). This began in coastal communities around 500 B.C., spreading in following centuries. This technology could not be assimilated independent of cultural practices, conceptual models and ideology (Haaland 2004, Frog 2012c). Archaeological and etymological evidence suggest the technology was learned from Germanic Scandinavia.[19] This technology penetrated almost every area of cultural life with tremendous impact on the semiotics of Finnic cultures and their mythologies. In contrast, bronze-working had potentially been semiotically significant but seems to have otherwise remained peripheral and parallel to Stone Age technologies (see Hakamies, this volume). Iron not only became an inherently magical substance: it appears to have been accompanied by a "package" of mythological material (images, motifs and whole narratives, including fundamental cosmological conceptions) assimilated in conjunction with the cultural practices through which it was communicated.

Nijolė Laurinkienė's (2008) proposal of a broad cycle of material about the Smith-God circulating in the Circum Baltic region can be expanded to include: *a*) the birth of the mythic smith at the beginning of the world;[20] *b*) a creation of the celestial sphere integrating iron-working technologies and *c*) associated cosmological models;[21] *d*) a (dualist) origin of iron;[22] *e*) an

origin of fire identified with *f*) an aetiology of lightning from the smith in heaven;[23] and *g*) a liberation of the captured sun.[24] Several narrative motifs or motif-complexes that provide cores of mythological narratives associated with iron-working and the vernacular smith-god figure can also be identified especially across Finnic and Germanic cultures, although it is uncertain whether these were independent narratives or attached to those listed above (see Frog 2011c: 30–32, 2012c). This material was invariably introduced into existing cultural environments, and although some narrative material may have been unfamiliar, it was also variously adapted into and mapped over existing traditions. For example, a liberation of the captured sun was probably part of both a PFU and PIE linguistic-cultural heritage (Witzel 2005) much as there were almost certainly current aetiologies of fire (cf. Aalto 1987 [1975]: esp. 93–94). However, the attachment of this material to the smith of heaven appears to be a cross-cultural phenomenon in the Circum-Baltic area. Similarly, crafting (in the broadest sense of "smith") was likely fundamental to Germanic cosmogony traditions (Meyer 1891: 21–22, 99–100) to which iron-working may have remained complementary (see Frog 2012c). The evidence presents only outcomes of diachronic processes. Thus it is possible that some traditions connected to bronze-working may have been reassigned to the new technology in one culture and subsequently carried into another. This makes it impossible to determine whether myths describing bronze-working were established independently in Finnic language areas (see further Frog 2011c: 34–35). In North Finnic mythologies, this package was in most cases unambiguously conceptualized through iron-working technologies, in both descriptions and in descriptors such as *taivahan takoja* ['forger/hammerer of heaven'] (see Salo 2006: 30–31).

Rather than inciting the emergence of a "new" mythological figure (cf. Honko 1981: 23–24), this package of mythological material was assimilated into the contemporary PF mythological system by assigning the "smith of heaven" identity to **Ilmari* (see further Hakamies, this volume) and narrative material also to **Ilmari* and **Väinä*(*möinen*) as paired figures (cf. Honko 1965: 34, 80). **Ilmari* became identified as *taivahan takoja* ['forger/hammerer of heaven'] and ascribed the creation of the vault of heaven with iron-working technology. This presumably either mapped the new technological model over an existing aetiology of the vault of heaven in which **Ilmari* was central (a **taiwas–*sampas* myth) or otherwise to some degree responded to a contemporary vernacular myth (cf. the discussion of *The Forging of the Sampo*, below). This aetiology of heaven is associated with the identification in Finnic, Sámi and Germanic cultures of the North Star with a "nail".[25] The conception of the "Pole Star" or North Star as a fixed point owing to, for example, a stake driven into the sky is widespread in Northern and Central Eurasia (cf. Eliade 1964: 259–263). In the Circum-Baltic, the star is identified as a "nail" at the top of the world pillar or "bottom" of the sky (conceived as an inverted cauldron) on which the vault of heaven rotates. The term for "nail" in these expressions is always a Germanic derivative < PG **naglan-* or PN **naglā* ['nail']. This mythic image is connected to fire-striking in ritual representations, associated with the thunder gods of Germanic and Sámi cultures, and apparently connected

to the Finnic aetiology of thunder and lightning from the mythic smith working at the top of the vault of heaven or world pillar (i.e. the god's spark / fire).[26] This mythic image also opens a narrative sequence of the origin and loss of fire by Ilmarinen (and Väinämöinen) in North Finnic, and by the vernacular thunder-god in Livonian and Latvian traditions, while the North Finnic recovery of fire from the mythic body of water corresponds to a more obscure Germanic myth in which the thunder-god has the key role.[27] This technology clearly had a transformative impact on vernacular mythologies with reconceptualizations of the phenomenal world. The association of the package of material with vernacular thunder-gods in other cultures, through which the technology and mythological models undoubtedly entered Finnic traditions, suggests that the identification of this material with PF **Ilmari* as demiurge and master of thunder and lightning is attributable to his role as the central sky-god. This would situate PF **Ilmari* in a position corresponding to PFU **Ilma* at that time, and potentially as master of the thunder-weapon (PF/PV **vaśara*). In other words, **Ilmari* was sufficiently central and active in narrative and myth to assimilate this material and identity (including lord of thunder), augmenting his power and authority. This is consistent with the implicit prominence of **Ilmari* in the theonym's assimilation into Udmurt.

Ukko, God of Thunder

By the era of documentation, the central sky-god was the thunder-god referred to as *Ukko* ['Old Man'] and other honorific or avoidance terms, leaving the underlying name unclear.[28] The centrality of the thunder-god in Finnic mythologies is attributed to stratified influences from Indo-European cultures and participates in a broader Circum-Baltic phenomenon.[29] Ukko is a *deus otiosus*, remote from the world (cf. Eliade 1958: 46–50). He exhibits centrality to magical and ritual activity as the primary supporter of the ritual specialist called a *tietäjä* ['knower, one who knows'], as well as an object to which ritual activity is directed.[30] The figure was not maintained in narratives: there is no evidence of a system of "Ukko"-myths *per se,* although there was a rich legend tradition concerning his hostile relationship with "devils" (cf. Valk, this volume). **Ilmari*'s assimilation of iron-working technologies (including the aetiology of thunder and role in the cosmology) suggests that that "Old Man" was not the dominant sky-god at the beginning of the present era, and potentially either not a thunder-god or not established at all. Ukko appears to have displaced **Ilmari* as both central sky-god and master of thunder at some point during the Iron Age.

Väinä / Väinämöinen, God of Calm Water?

Väinä(möinen), acting independently of both Ukko and Ilmari(nen) (< PF **Ilmari*), appears primarily responsible for the creation and organization of the world. *Väinä-möinen* is a metrically conditioned diminutive of

the simplex *Väinä* or *Väinö* [*Väinä*.DIM]. PF **väinä* ['wide, calm, deep, slow-moving water; (geographical) sound, (geographical) strait' (Setälä 1914: 4–5)] is an archaic term considered a loan from an IE language.[31] In documented folklore, Väinämöinen fulfils diver functions in the world-creation and has strong associations with water.[32] Rather than a celestial god, the semantic field of the theonym associates this figure with the opposing element of the world-creation – water. This appears semantically appropriate for the antithesis of a FU sky-god (Limerov 2005: 125–126), as does his role as diver. Its ability to be used as a simplex *Väinä* or *Väinö* from which derivatives were earlier produced supports a history from a PF theonym **Väinä*.[33] Väinä(möinen) is also conventionally paired with Ilmarinen in narratives in contrast to, for example, Ukko or Christian figures such as Mary and Jesus (although epic cycles about Christian figures were popular among the same singers). This is a potential indicator of their relationship being rooted in a different historical and ideological context than these other prominent figures.[34] Evidence for Väinämöinen is only preserved in North Finnic traditions, where he is the most central positive mythic figure (very few vernacular theonyms are preserved in South Finnic languages). Although this explains his persistence on the one hand, it also raises the question of whether he held the same centrality in South Finnic cultural areas, as well as why this figure is more prominent than the mythic smith Ilmari(nen) in kalevalaic epic.

A "New" Institution of Ritual Specialist

Within the era of documentation, the *tietäjä* ['knower, one who knows'] was "the heir to the role played by the shaman in ancient communities" who "preserved shamanic models of thought" (Siikala 2002a: 42). Väinämöinen, *tietäjä iän ikuinen* ['*tietäjä*, of age eternal'], appears as the mythic founder of this institution (Siikala 2002a: 345), making it significant to consider this institution as a potential factor in the history of his identity.

The *tietäjä* institution emerged and spread in response to a new technology of incantations and rite techniques which exhibit heavy reliance on Germanic models (see Siikala 2002a for discussion). Both this technology and associated institution appear to be specific to North Finnic cultures (cf. Krohn 1901, Roper 2008). This new technology was founded on verbally transmitted textual entities of Kalevala-meter poetry. These poems allowed the *tietäjä* to actualize and manipulate remote otherworld locations (Frog 2010c). This technology eliminated the necessity of proximity for interactions with the mythic world that characterized classic shamanism, where soul-journeys by a shaman or his spirit-helpers were conceptualized in physical terms of geographical distances (Siikala 2002a: 345). These incantations were not simply "poems", they were conceptualized as powerful orally transmitted knowledge-objects. The transmission of the text-object was not simply a communication of knowledge, but also a transmission of its "power". This "power" was (or could be) lost by the previous possessor as a function of transmission, while the owner/possessor could apparently

assume a textual entity as first-hand experience.[35] This incantation tradition is set apart from other traditions of Europe and Asia by its emphasis on "origins", which construct a direct power-relation between the *tietäjä* and his illness adversary (Hästesko 1918: 28, 182-183, Siikala 2002a: 89). The role of origins appears rooted in shamanic modes of thought, corresponding to first-hand knowledge acquired by a shaman initiate through visionary experience (Siikala 2002a: 86–91, 158–159). However, the crystallization of such knowledge of origins in incantations allowed the new technology to accommodate these functions through the verbal knowledge-objects which could be assumed as personal, first-hand knowledge of mythic time.

Incantation techniques are not inherently opposed to "classic" shamanism. They may be complimentary or identified with different types of ritual specialists in a coherent community. However, the PFU term **nojta* ['shaman'] was maintained in Finno-Karelian traditions to designate a magically powerful and dangerous "other" or Sámi shaman rather than a ritual specialist of the in-group community, and came to be used in the European sense of "witch" during the later medieval period.[36] The lexical distinction between *tietäjä* and *noita* as "in-group" and "other", respectively, suggests that the *tietäjä* is not a direct reflex of the *noita*-institution, and that these institutions may have been competing.[37] If this reflects a social struggle between competing institutions, one factor confronted by the *tietäjä* may have been the very general tendency for "shamanic" ritual specialists to be held in higher regard than other institutions (Eliade 1964). This appears to be associated with their direct access to locations and inhabitants of the otherworld, and such regard is reflected within the *tietäjä* institution itself in the value and authority placed on magical knowledge acquired from the Sámi or from *noita*s (Haavio 1967: 326, Siikala 2002b: 34, Tarkka 2005: 127; on the corresponding Sámi term *noaidi*, see Rydving 2010: 73–89). However, a competition between these two types of ritual specialist may have been more complex.

Essential conceptual models of the *tietäjä*-institution appear incompatible with an institution of shamanism. "Classic" shamanism relies on conceptions of a separable soul. Speaking generally, conceptions of the separable soul appear historically excluded from the traditions of the *tietäjä*. Soul-journeys were not integrated as a practical strategy in ritual practice,[38] and soul-loss was excluded from illness-diagnostics (Honko 1959a: 127–129, 1960: 71–72; cf. Siikala 2002a: 250–263). The central conceptual model of illness was the penetrable body, to which dynamic forces or mythic objects became attached or which they penetrated (Stark 2006), but this did not extend to a separability of part of that body nor apparently its penetration by animating spirits ("possession") which might be considered a reflex of "shamanism". Diachronically, this suggests a radical conceptual shift in inherited conceptions of the soul, and earlier conceptions of the separable soul are reflected in linguistic and folkloric data (Haavio 1967: 283–314, Siikala 2002a). Synchronically, the separable soul and soul-loss retained prominence in Sámi shamanism (Bäckman & Hultkrantz 1978: 44) and remained recognized as such (cf. *SKVR* XII_1 263, XII_1 3520), much as the separable soul is almost completely absent from Swedish belief legends

except where attributed to Sámi sorcerers (af Klintberg 2010: 299). Finno-Karelians and Sámi were in ongoing contact and interaction for centuries, including the assimilation of local Sámi populations in the present era (Pöllä 1995). This suggests that the authority, power and knowledge attributed to Sámi and *noita*s was correlated with social and/or ethnic identities related to the in-group, represented by the *tietäjä*, and the "other", represented by the *noita*. The identification of these conceptual models and strategies with social identities would explain their historical maintenance as structurally opposed rather than inclined to integration, and parallels other traditions associated with social identities and cognitive models (Frog 2010a: 230–236).

The heavy influence of Germanic models on the incantation tradition suggests that the technology of incantations may have been imported with systems of cognitive models of the soul and illness on which its strategies for interaction with the unseen world were (initially) dependent. This simultaneously suggests that this technology of incantations was not integrated into the vernacular tradition of shamanism, although it assimilated images, motifs, mythic figures, narrative traditions and other aspects of modes of thought in the adaptation to the vernacular semiotic system.

Mythological Epic and the tietäjä

The technology of incantations was intimately connected to kalevalaic mythology and mythological narratives (e.g. Tarkka 2005: 71). Mythological epics and portions thereof could be presented both as and in incantations. The *tietäjä*-institution provided the conduit of authority[39] for kalevalaic epic traditions. This institution can therefore be considered to have shaped the epic traditions according to its priorities and interests as a historical process (cf. Siikala 1978: 13, Frog 2011c: 32–34). The epic traditions of the *tietäjä* communicated mythic knowledge, conceptual models and identity representations. They drew on shamanic images and narrative material identifiable with a vernacular shamanic heritage, but the epic narratives themselves deemphasize the significance of otherworld locations and topography, focusing on the "words" or knowledge-objects acquired there by Väinämöinen as the mythic founder of the institution (Siikala 2002a: 345). Väinämöinen's prominence as a figure in these epic traditions can be directly associated with his role as the cultural model for the ritual specialist: Väinämöinen acquired the mythic knowledge which could be transmitted orally (and assumed as personal experience), obviating the need for others to repeat his journeys. His role as demiurge can be correspondingly associated with first-hand knowledge of the creation as an ultimate source of power (see Tarkka 2005: 160–198), and its appearance as his ultimate power-attribute (Siikala 2002a: 273).

Väinä(möinen)'s centrality contrasts with the secondary and peripheral role of Ilmari(nen) when these figures are situated on a continuum model. Väinä has not left evidence outside of North Finnic traditions – i.e. where

this technology of incantations and institution of the *tietäjä* became established. PF **Ilmari*'s prominence is implicit in his assimilation of the "smith of heaven" identity and widespread cross-cultural impacts, outlined above. However, within the *tietäjä*-mythology, Ilmari(nen)'s identity as the smith of heaven and sky-god were only maintained in function-specific contexts (affirmations of the god's authority, specific incantations, riddles, etc.), whereas the *tietäjä* regarded Ukko as the central sky-god and source of celestial support. In the *tietäjä*-mythology, Ilmari's identity was centrally that of a mythic smith without emphasis on cosmological significance and he emerges as a relatively passive figure secondary to Väinä (see Hakamies, this volume).

Väinä(möinen)'s centrality appears directly connected to his role as the cultural model of the *tietäjä*-institution. The technology of incantations could not be learned and internalized independent of cultural practices. Its adaptation was clearly bound to the assimilation of ideologies. The pattern of heavy influences from Germanic models on the incantation tradition suggests that the technology of incantations may therefore have been accompanied by mythological material and models for its use and functions (see further Frog 2012c; cf. Siikala 2002a). This process of assimilation can be reasonably considered to have involved identity models for the ritual specialist. Väinä's centrality is directly comparable to the rise of the god Odin in Germanic tradition. Odin was the corresponding cultural model of the vernacular ritual specialist. Although Odin's identity was historically rooted as a chthonic god, he became attributed with the roles of demiurge and supreme celestial god. (See e.g. de Vries 1956–1957 II: 27–106, Simek 1993: 240–249.) Evidence for PF **Väinä* above suggests that Väinä(möinen) was consistent with a figure antithetical to the sky-god – i.e. with the antithesis of PF **Ilmari*. Within the frame of Germanic influences on the *tietäjä*-institution, it is unlikely to be accidental that both Germanic and North Finnic cultural models for ritual specialist are figures antithetical to the sky-god of their respective linguistic-cultural heritage and that both exhibit a rise to centrality situating them in a position of authority over such sky-gods. It therefore seems probable that Väinä's rise to centrality is attributable to Germanic models corresponding to Odin. As there is no indication that *Väinä*(*möinen*) is a translation or adaptation of a Germanic theonym, it seems probable that the identity of the Germanic cultural model (Odin) was mapped over a corresponding vernacular mythic figure. This would be consistent with PF**Väinä* as the antithesis of PF **Ilmari* suggested above and complements the probability of that identification. According to this model, **Väinä* would have become the object of these traditions owing to a correlation with a Germanic figure just as **Ilmari*, being a central celestial god, became identified with iron-working technologies.

The Song of Creation from Viena Karelia to Estonia

The Sampo-Cycle and Väinä(möinen)'s exceptional prominence are potentially exclusive to North Finnic cultures. The relationship of Väinä to

the technology of incantations and to the *tietäjä*-ideology more generally highlight *The Song of Creation* as Väinämöinen's ultimate claim to power and authority through first-hand knowledge of the creation of the world. This song simultaneously presents an opening to the Sampo-Cycle, situating the cycle's events with a direct continuity to the beginning of the world (cf. Tarkka, this volume). This must be approached in the frame of the *tietäjä*-institution as a historical conduit of authority for epic transmission. This song was also performed independently or in conjunction with other mythological narrative material and incantations. It was one of the most powerful and compelling mythic songs of the tradition. The central event-sequence is the bird of creation laying eggs which break, and the emergence of heavenly bodies from their contents, all through the agency of Väinä. This song was maintained in different forms across regions where kalevalaic epic was sung, as well as in South Finnic singing traditions. By the era of collection, the mythological poetry was almost completely extinct from all regions of Lutheran Finland, although it could still be recorded in these areas a hundred years earlier (cf. Kuusi et al. 1977, Siikala 2002b). The singing regions where the mythological traditions were preserved can be practically surveyed as a band moving roughly from north to south, beginning in Viena Karelia near the White Sea, roughly along the border of modern-day Karelia to the south and into Savo, and around the Gulf of Finland to Ingria and Estonia.

Mythological epic traditions were most richly and conservatively preserved in Viena. In Viena, epic was primarily subject to kin-group transmission, with multiple redactions maintained in close contact (Kuusi 1949: 14–15, Tarkka 2005: 44–45). There, individual singers were able to sing and refer to redactions of other kin-groups while maintaining versions associated with their own in-group identity (Frog 2010c: 99–100). In this region, the Sampo-Cycle and *The Song of Creation* had maintained a position in belief traditions, ritual practice, and (attested on a limited basis) in the ritual life of the community as an epic performed each spring to protect sown crops from frost (e.g. *SKVR* I_1 88b; see further Tarkka, this volume). Väinämöinen was the earth-diver demiurge. The world-egg motif introduced above was embedded in a complex narrative sequence where Väinämöinen (or simply Väinä) raises the first land from his own body for the bird to build a nest and his movements subsequently cause the eggs to break, from which Väinä can finally realize the creation through a speech-act.

To the south of this region, epic gradually becomes primarily subject to village-based transmission and passed from the ritual life of the community into common informal contexts of performance with other narrative traditions that were employed for entertainment. Epics correspondingly shifted in emphasis toward adventure and humour. (Siikala 2002b: 28.) The complex narrative sequence associated with Väinämöinen appears simpler; its episodes appear in alternative contexts and in various organizations. In these regions, obscure terms, images and narrative sequences were frequently reinterpreted, omitted, transferred to an alternative context, or simply adapted into new contexts as a model

or social resource. Väinä eventually disappears entirely from regional traditions: the first land rises from the sea without an agent; the wind or "wind of God" becomes the agent that breaks the eggs, and a connection to the Sampo-Cycle is absent.

One significant development in southerly regions is the song's adaptation, synthesized and reorganized as a social resource and meaningful referent, into the opening of a lyric narrative song *Creating the Island* (*Saaren luominen*), which becomes infused with mythic quality through the culturally loaded cosmogonic images and motifs (see Siikala 2007; cf. Frog 2010a: 308–317). In this song, the bird finds a ship rather than land on which to build its nest; tipped by the wind, the egg falls and breaks for the origin of the first land, on which is a maiden to be courted, and so forth. Rounding the Gulf of Finland in Ingria, epic song passed much earlier into a women's singing tradition, moving into common conduits of transmission and contexts of performance with other genres of song, producing the so-called "lyric-epic" form (Siikala 1990a: 14–19). Ingria was a culturally dynamic region (see Nenola 2002: 11–16, 54–58). Rather than raised earth or a ship, the Ižorian (a North Finnic) tradition of Ingria presents the bird with a choice of three hillocks of different colours. Whereas Ižorians were associated with Orthodox Christianity, migrations from Savo and Karelia in the 16th and 17th centuries established a large Lutheran population that carried *Creating the Island* into this region, where it "became" *The Song of Creation* among these Lutheran communities: the broken egg became the source of the sun and moon according to the cross-cultural regional pattern. In both Ingrian-Finnish and Ižorian traditions, the eggs are broken by (e.g.) the wind and the bird visits a smith who makes a magic rake for recovering the heavenly bodies from the sea. This is a regional, cross-cultural development. The motif of the rake was assimilated from another epic that dropped out of circulation, requiring the exceptional attribution of anthropomorphic speech and tool-use to the bird. (See Frog 2010a: 94–98.)

North Finnic traditions are generally characterized by a continuity in *The Song of Creation* as a textual entity – i.e. not just as a narrative, but as a verbal poem and song – and variation is in relation to that textual entity. South Finnic or Estonian traditions present related narrative content, but evidence of sharing in a common textual entity is lacking (see e.g. Puhvel 1971). However, the material is problematic as it may have emerged from a lyric adaptation of epic material (cf. *Creating the Island*) rather than reflecting a smooth and undisrupted continuity from a mythic song associated with belief content. The South Finnic traditions also deviate from the basic pattern significantly: the bird, sometimes flying from water, selects one shrub of several differentiated by colour, creates a nest and hatches eggs there. The eggs produce the sun, moon and a third object – most often a stone (Puhvel 1971: 1–3) comparable to the first stone raised in many diver myths (cf. Mansikka 1908). Matti Kuusi (1994b: 62) points out that, in Northern Estonian songs, this may incorporate the birth of the smith from an egg and his immediate forging activity, potentially connected to the smith of heaven traditions introduced above. The motif of an agent or force breaking of the eggs is absent.

Ingrian-Finnish and Ižorian populations could be both mutually aware of one another's redactions of *The Song of Creation* and able to perform them. Rather than this distinction being centrally linguistic or according to kin-group (as in Viena), the distinction appears centrally constructed according to in-groups of ritual activity (Lutheran and Orthodox) (Salminen 1929a: 60; cf. *SKVR* III_2 2174, III_2 2175). Epic singing traditions resisted transmission over that social identity threshold, even in lyric-epic forms (cf. Salminen 1929a, 1929b). Nevertheless, the long-term history of contact and interaction resulted in regionally characterized ways of singing as part of a much broader continuum of regional patterns in kalevalaic singing traditions (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 209–211). The Historical-Geographic Method's emphasis on manuscript-stemma models of "diffusion" had great difficulty with the relationships between these traditions (cf. Haavio 1952, Kuusi 1956, Puhvel 1971). These traditions "lived" in social realities of small-group interaction with contact between these groups. This survey proposes evolution across a synchronic continuum of small-groups capable of reciprocal influence in diachronic processes. The synchronic continuum intersects with the historical continuum model. Regional forms therefore do not evolve in directions wholly independent of adjacent local and regional traditions, nor do they necessarily align with the characteristics of the tradition when it was first established in a cultural area (as the Historical-Geographic Method was inclined to read them) (see also Frog 2012b). For example, the motif of raised earth appears across all North Finnic traditions except Ižorian, where instead the bird selects one of three objects of different colours. This alternative motif corresponds to the otherwise radically different South Finnic (Estonian) traditions. When variation in the tradition is regarded as a whole, this is one aspect of the rather fluid continuum of variation. In Ingria, these processes were no doubt facilitated and accelerated by the displacement of these songs from the central belief traditions accompanied by a shift in genre. They nonetheless emphasize historical patterns of synthesis and interaction between adjacent groups in which equivalent (though not fully identical) mythological narrative traditions were maintained.

The present study differs from earlier investigations by situating the Finnic material on a historical continuum model. The earth-diver in combination with the world-egg motif presents a probable continuity of PFU linguistic-cultural heritage (earth-diver) complemented by early cross-cultural contacts (world-egg). Väinä(möinen) was present in regions were the mythology was most conservatively and extensively maintained and absent in regions where these songs were displaced from the ritual life of the community and belief traditions, and where Christianity had received increased centrality earlier and more rapidly. Nevertheless, he continued to be affirmed as demiurge throughout all of these regions in *The Singing Competition* (*Kilpalaulanta*). Persistence of the motif in the latter song appears to be a function of narrative pragmatics (cf. Frog 2012b: 49): Väinä's claim of first-hand knowledge of and participation in the creation of the world is the climax of the narrative as the ultimate claim to authority that wins the competition. In North Finnic regions where Väinä was absent

from *The Song of Creation*, the breaking of the world-egg is always attributed to an agent – either to a "natural" phenomenon (wind, storm, waves) or a potentially Christian agent ("God's wind"). The role of the agent appears to have been maintained owing to structural conditions essential to the narrative pragmatics: the egg is "broken"; someone or something other than the egg or bird is responsible. This would be consistent the "deletion" of the inherited agentive role of earth-diver demiurge where the vernacular cosmogony was confronted by a rise in Christian ideological models. The unprovoked and destructive act of breaking the egg is more consistent with a chthonic figure than a positive celestial god, and had the role earlier been ascribed to a positive celestial figure such as Ilmari or Ukko, it would more likely have been transferred directly to "God" or "God's Son" according to a common pattern. The attribution of both the diver-role and breaking of the egg to a single figure in Viena would be consistent with the narrative pattern across North Finnic areas.[40] Rather than an unknown figure being displaced from this role by a diversity of alternatives in different regions, the constellation of diverse evidence corroborates the underlying role of Väinä as diver-demiurge with an agentive role in the world-egg motif. It offers a very high probability of continuity in this role from a PF heritage of **Väinä* as earth-diver and antithesis of **Ilmari* although this appears to have been subject to radical revision under the influence and ideology of the *tietäjä*-institution.

The Estonian material suggests the earlier centrality of the world-egg motif. It could also – at least potentially – reflect an earlier association with the smith of heaven, absent from the North Finnic *Song of Creation*. However, circulation in lyric-epic form has left its relation to FU earth-diver traditions completely obscure. It also lacks all motifs relevant to the Väinämöinen-world-creation. The North Finnic traditions present a dynamic picture of widespread continuity at the level of a single, coherent narrative poem that developed in different ways in different regions. Väinä(möinen) is the only vernacular mythic figure identifiable with an agentive role in this sequence (the bird remaining almost incidental). The song's textual entity exhibits linguistic evidence of deep-rooted historical connections with western Finnish traditions with Germanic influences (Kuusi 1949: 302–307). This complicates investigation because linguistic evidence suggests a background in regions where the tradition was not preserved. However, it also suggests that the textual entity spread through networks of communities in contact and population movements rather than an inheritance of the textual entity from a common PF linguistic-cultural substratum. A form of *The Song of Creation* schematically equivalent to the Väinämöinen-world-creation apparently emerged and circulated to become established as dominant throughout North Finnic communities, presumably displacing/assimilating an antecedent.

Väinämöinen, the Earth-Diver – Väinämöinen, the Earth

When situated in a long-term continuum model, Väinämöinen's role as earth-diver appears highly exceptional from the perspective of a PFU

heritage in three respects: *a*) **Ilmari* or corresponding sky-god is absent and excluded;[41] *b*) the diver-actions of shaping the sea floor are a passive consequence of rolling on the waves *kuusissa hakona* / *petäjäissä pölkyn peänä* ['as a spruce log / as the end of a pine log'] (*SKVR* I_1 1, 31–32; cf. Kuusi 1949: 158); and *c*) the first earth raised from the primal sea is part of Väinämöinen's own body. The absence of a sky-god deviates from the dualist earth-diver paradigm. It contrasts with evidence that PF **Ilmari* was a demiurge figure (iron-working or otherwise). Although Ukko generally displaced **Ilmari* as the central sky-god of the *tietäjä*-institution, Ukko did not assimilate **Ilmari*'s role as demiurge and remains unconnected to the cosmogony. The "deletion" of Väinä from *The Song of Creation* can be observed in southern regions, yet there remains no discernible structural position for the sky-god in these narrative poems either. Väinä's passivity in the diver-role is connected to an instigating event in which Väinä is shot and falls (from his horse) into the primal sea (addressed below). His sojourn on the sea corresponds to a death-like state (cf. e.g. *SKVR* I_1 54, 113–114). In terms of narrative pragmatics, the identification of Väinä's body with the first land is essential to his role as agent causing the egg of creation to break: he raises part of his own body in response to the bird's search for a location to build a nest, and eventually moves because the heat from the bird's brooding causes him discomfort. The identification of the first land with the corpse of an anthropomorphic being reflects a radical reconceptualization from PFU (although cf. PF **taiwas* < **Daivas* above). It can be compared to the Germanic creation of the world from the corpse of the slain giant *Ymir*, raised by his slayers from the primal sea of the giant's blood.[42]

A creation event from the corpse of a murdered animal or anthropomorphic being is widespread. Parallels are found in other FU cultures where this creation-scenario is clearly secondary – e.g. in aetiological legends of local landscapes (cf. Siikala, this volume), much as North Finnic reflexes of a dualist diver myth (featuring god and the devil) are only found in local aetiological legends rather than as an origin of the world itself.[43] The creation of the world from the corpse of a murdered anthropomorphic being, PIE **Yemo-* ['Twin'] (> e.g. *Ymir*), appears to belong to the Indo-European mythological heritage (Lincoln 1975, 1986: 1–64, West 2007: 356–359). The role of Väinämöinen as an anthropomorphic being whose corpse supplies the material for the central world-creation most probably emerged under the influence of Indo-European models. It is reasonable to assume that this conceptual identification of the prime land with the corpse of a murdered anthropomorphic being was not assimilated independent of narrative model(s).

Approaching Intertextuality in the Sampo-Cycle

Before opening discussion of narrative models that may be in the background of *The Song of Creation*, it is useful to first consider intertextual strategies between episodes or songs of the Sampo-Cycle itself. Observing intertextual strategies and their maintenance where both reference and referent can be

identified in living tradition provides a valuable foundation for considering adaptations or intertextual strategies on the basis of comparative evidence. The term "intertextuality" has been used in a number of different ways (see e.g. Allen 2000). It is here used in the narrow sense of oriented reference that generates a relationship between specific, discrete and socially recognizable "texts". Intertextual strategies can be perceived in the relationship between *The Song of Creation* and *The Theft of the Sampo*. The latter closes the cycle with a description of a sea-raid to steal the *sampo* from the realm of Pohjola ['North-(Place)'], concluding with a battle on Väinämöinen's ship during which the *sampo* is broken apart and/or lost in the sea. *The Theft of the Sampo* relates the fate of the mythic object and the significance of the battle to the created world. Consequently, singers' interpretations of the significance of those events (or lack thereof) and/or their relationship to the characterization of mythic figures could be a significant factor in the local and regional variation of this song. It remained most vital in northern regions, where its connections with belief traditions may even have multiplied (cf. Tarkka, this volume), for example becoming attached to a special Northern European family of tale-type ATU 565 "The Magic Mill", in which the loss of the magic mill in the sea explains the sea's saltiness.[44] Particularly in regions farther south, the creation of the *sampo–kirjokansi* became opaque, resulting in, for example, reconceptualizing the *kirjokansi* ['ornamented cover'] as a chest or casket, conflating *sampo* with *sampi* ['sturgeon'], and otherwise leading to the sea-raid narrative being mapped over new objects (e.g. a kidnapped maiden).[45] This song could not maintain currency in Christian social environments by simply "deleting" Väinämöinen as in *The Song of Creation*. It was more inclined to adapt toward popular narrative entertainments, highlighting humour or adventure, or it simply dropped out of use while compelling narrative and textual material could be adapted to new contexts.[46] In spite of this variation, the narrative sequence and its essential features seem to have been maintained even when it was isolated from the Sampo-Cycle or integrated into a new, broader narrative framework.

Simplifying variation, the narrative can be summarized as follows: Väinämöinen organizes a sea-raid on Pohjola, where Ilmarinen has created the *sampo*. He is accompanied by Ilmarinen and a third companion (who may join the party after their departure). On arrival, Väinä plays the *kantele* (the traditional harp-like instrument), causing everyone in Pohjola to fall asleep. The *sampo* is locked behind nine locks (overcome by Väinä) and the third companion ploughs the roots of the *sampo*, freeing it from the earth. The heroes sail away with the *sampo*. The Mistress of Pohjola wakes, discovers the theft, and pursues the heroes in her own ship. Väinä tosses a piece of flint over his shoulder and this becomes a shoal or island on which the pursuing ship breaks apart. The Mistress of Pohjola transforms herself, the ship and crew into a mythic bird and lands on Väinä's ship. Väinä disrupts the bird's attempt to take the sampo with a blow from his oar, and the *sampo* is inadvertently broken, resulting in a redistribution of its creative power. The mythic bird returns to the North (with the *kirjokansi* ['ornamented cover'; poetic 'vault of heaven']).

From within the tradition, intertextual strategies become sharply apparent in the sequence leading up to the battle over the *sampo* and its destruction. This begins with Väinä magically raising land from the sea to form an island. This parallels the image of Väinä raising the first land from the primal sea. Alone, this image might *index* the world-creation event, but it would likely be seen as accidental rather than activating an intertextual referent. However, such indexical elements are cumulative, and as they are brought together in a concentrated or organized way, they become capable of activating a recognizable whole in a way that the separate elements cannot do individually (Frog 2010a: esp. 22). This image combines with the breaking apart of the ship, paralleling the breaking of the egg of creation, and rather than a mythic bird landing on Väinä's island to lay the egg, here a mythic bird rises from the broken object that indexes the egg. The concentrated image-system is then reduplicated (cf. Lord 1960: 174) as this mythic bird lands on Väinä's ship rather than on his knee (cf. *Creating an Island* above) and he is again the disruptive agent, resulting in the breaking of the *sampo* and its falling into the sea like the egg of creation. This image-system does not freely occur in other contexts.[47] These are highly conventionalized representations, and their relationship appears to have been maintained as a historical process where the intertextual relationship between them was highlighted as the climactic events respectively opening and concluding the Sampo-Cycle.

Whereas *The Forging of the Sampo* (discussed below) follows immediately on *The Song of Creation* with a pragmatic function of connecting the *sampo*'s origin with the beginning of the world (see Tarkka, this volume), *The Theft of the Sampo* engages *The Song of Creation* intertextually, weighting the significance and meaning-potential of the images and motifs. The intertextual engagement is reflected in the tradition where some singers connected these images on the verbal level, such as using the same expressions describing Väinä raising land from the sea or referring to the mythic bird with the same expressions as the bird of creation (see Kuusi 1949: 159, 200–201). Perhaps the most central social significance of the destruction of the *sampo* was as an aetiology of the origins and distributions of fertility into the world (Tarkka 2005: 162–175), which may be rooted in an early ethnocultural stratum (cf. Kuusi 1994b: 58–59). The intertextual association of the *sampo* with the world-egg informs these fertility-associations. For example, Ohvo Homanen described the origin of the sun and moon from the broken world-egg at the beginning of his performance of the Sampo-Cycle (*SKVR* I_1 83a, 39–50), and his conceptual or symbolic identification of the *sampo* with the world-egg became explicit when he explained the *sampo* following the performance: *Sammossa oli kaikki moailman hüvüs, kuu ja päivä ja armas aurinkoinen* ['All of the goodness in the world was in the *sampo*, the moon and daylight and dear sun'] (*SKVR* I_1 83a, n.19; see also Tarkka, this volume). Within this intertextual system, the transformation of the Mistress of Pohjola assumes a contrastive relationship to the bird of creation, as though casting her as its antithesis, attempting to rescind the initial creation-event by taking the world-egg before it could be broken. Intertextuality expands the battle to cosmological proportions.

The sampo and Shattering the World Pillar

The maintenance of intertextual relationships between *The Song of Creation* and *The Theft of the Sampo* was no doubt enhanced by their participation in a coherent narrative cycle. However, other intertextual engagements can also be readily identified. For example, when Väinä magically creates an island with a piece of flint (an "Object Flight" motif, D 672), the flint is a key element in maintaining an intertextual connection to *The Origin of Fire* (*Tulen synty*), which could also be emphasized at visual and verbal levels of representation (Kuusi 1949: 200). The singing tradition was so conservative that the essential systems of images and motifs became "suspended" in the narratives and remained identifiable even where the specific connections lost currency. Whole narrative segments could also be transferred as a poetic sequence from one poem to another, as with the motif of the magic rake mentioned above. In some cases, such suspended material becomes discernable when situated on a continuum model.

The creation of the *sampo* is a mythic event which was semantically central to the Sampo-Cycle. Unlike *The Song of Creation* or *The Theft of the Sampo*, *The Forging of the Sampo* was not exhibited as an independent song. The *sampo* was invariably produced through images and verbs of iron-working (Kuusi 1949: 180–181). This was done by Ilmarinen, although it was attributed to Väinämöinen in isolated redactions (cf. Kuusi 1949: 127, Frog 2010a: 97). The form *sampo* is a metrically conditioned diminutive of *sammas* (< PF **sampas*) owing to the metrical demands of the Kalevala-meter (Harva 1946: 53; cf. Anttonen, this volume). A parallel term for *sampo* was *kirjokansi* ['ornamented cover'], a poetic equivalent to the vault of heaven (Setälä 1932: 524–528). The creation of both appears significant to the tradition, particularly where the Mistress of Pohjola departs with only the *kirjokansi* while (the rest of) the *sampo* is lost. Ilmarinen forging the *sampo–kirjokansi* warrants comparison with **Ilmari* forging the **taiwas*–(**sampas*) as the smith of heaven. This creative act was not preserved in narrative accounts or connected to the current *tietäjä*-cosmology (Kuusi et al. 1977: 524). Instead it is only found "suspended" in brief descriptive references to Ilmari(nen)'s greatest feat of skill and designations such as *taivosen takoja* ['the smith of heaven.DIM'] (*SKVR* I_1 97, 160; see also Hakamies, this volume). Ilmari's creation of the vault of heaven was not directly identified with the creation of the *sampo*. It could be referred to in that context, but the forging of the *sampo–kirjokansi* does not seem to have been considered identical to forging the **taiwas*–(**sampas*). However, in a context where the myth of **Ilmari* forging the **taiwas*–(**sampas*) were current, the account of forging the *sampo–kirjokansi* would almost certainly appear as – at the very least – a transparent intertextual reference, particularly when *sampo* is a transparent diminutive of *sammas* (and *sammas* was sometimes used to refer to the *sampo*: see examples in Tarkka, this volume). *Sammas* simultaneously persisted across Finnic languages in the sense of "world pillar", suspended in sayings concerned with the world pillar's endurance until the end of the world (Setälä 1932: 594–596, Loorits 1949–1952 I: 401). This *sammas*-image contrasts with the destruction of the *sampo* to the point of paradox because

the destruction of the *sammas*/world pillar is identified with the end rather than beginning of the present world order. It is probable that the narrative of the *sampo*'s destruction emerged in a context where a reflex of PF **Ilmari*'s creation of the **taiwas* (and presumably also the **sampas*) as well as the endurance of the **sampas* held currency – i.e. that there was not a historical "lapse" between these traditions. Therefore, the resemblance of the term *sampo* and associated narrative should not be considered accidental. If this is correct, then (however *sampo* is interpreted) the destruction of the *sampo* would be informed as an event of apocalyptic proportions, infusing it with eschatological significance through the symbolic and lexical correlation with the world-pillar as an intertextual strategy. Semantically, this directly parallels the manipulation of *The Song of Creation* as an intertextual referent as the context in which this image occurs.

Forging the sampo in Cross-Cultural Comparison

The identification of the *sampo* with the world pillar and its creation with iron-working technologies raises the question of whether the intertextual strategies may have extended from the lexeme *sampo*, mythic image and motif of the object's (eschatological) destruction to narrative material surrounding the construction of the mythic object itself. Although it is impossible to assess without additional points of reference, kalevalaic mythology was so textually stable that the textual entity of a full description could even have been transferred to a new context (cf. Kuusi 1963), like the episode with the magic rake observed above. The essential motif characterizing the creation of the *sampo* is its production from a series of "impossible objects" (see Tarkka, this volume). This motif potentially belongs to the minimal narrative cores connected to the smith of heaven. Parallels in Germanic tradition do not preserve enough examples to assure that this and other motifs did not move freely between mythic acts of iron-working. In kalevalaic mythology, however, the motif of creation from "impossible objects" remained specific to the forging of the *sampo* just as creating a series of mythic objects before concluding with a maiden of gold remained specific to *The Forging of the Golden Maiden* (*Kultaneidon taonta*) rather than these motifs moving between them (cf. Kuusi 1949: 181). Rather than a complete maiden, the latter motif is connected with only forging the hair of the wife of the thunder-god in Germanic tradition (Faulkes 1998: 41–42), whereas the motif of impossible objects appears in the forging of a fetter intended to bind the adversary of Odin and that will endure until the end of the world, and the destruction of the mythic object forged from "impossible objects" signals the vernacular apocalypse (Faulkes 1982: 27–28). These parallels are complemented by other similar – if minor – correlations of minimal narrative cores, which support the probability of reflecting long-term continuities rather than being accidental and random outcomes (Frog 2011c: 32, 2012c).

The *sampo* does not endure until the end of the world as the *sammas* (**sampas*) should, it is characterized by motifs weighting its destruction

intertextually with eschatological proportions. This would suggest the common underlying narrative core of *a*) a mythic object *b*) created from "impossible objects" *c*) using iron-working technologies *d*) in the establishment of the present world order *e*) that will endure until the end of the world *f*) at which time it will be destroyed, as well as *g*) its destruction being referred to socially as a signal of the end of the world. It cannot be certain that this motif became identified PF with **Ilmari*'s creation of the **sampas* in conjunction with the "package" of mythological material characterizing that ethnocultural substratum (nor even that it was part of that early "package"). However, its use in the Sampo-Cycle suggests that semantics of eschatological proportions like those found in the Germanic tradition informed its meaning-potential. If it was not associated with the **sammas*, these semantics led it to become identified with the creation of the *sampo* – exclusively as the other myth dropped out of circulation or was otherwise eclipsed.

The Deception of the Tree in Cross-Cultural Comparison

Points of comparison are cumulative in assessing the probability of a relationship between traditions. The common underlying narrative core addressed above nests in the accumulation of minimal cores connected to iron-working technology and smith of heaven traditions in the Circum-Baltic region, characterizing a particular ethnocultural substratum. The accumulation of points of comparison of course becomes more compelling when concentrated in a single case, particularly when they are specific to that case rather than occurring as popular images and motifs freely combined throughout the tradition. This is the case for the narrative sequence conventionally identified as the song *The Forging of the Sampo*.

The forging-event is presented in two contexts. One of these was characteristic of southern regions where Ilmarinen was foregrounded, the Sampo-Cycle had lost connections with belief-traditions, and the image of the *sampo* had become obscure or completely opaque. Rather than an event following on the world-creation as a mythic feat of independent significance, forging of the *sampo* was realized as a challenge for the hero in the bridal-quest narrative *The Courtship Competition* (*Kilpakosinta*) and *The Courtship of Hiisi's Maiden* (*Hiidestä kosinta*). Its significance was reduced to one in a series of mythic feats. *The Courtship Competition* was an adventure of both Väinä and Ilmari, in which Ilmari was the conventional champion.[48] As one of Ilmari's greatest feats, the adaptation of the creation of the *sampo* to this context is not itself surprising.

The other narrative context was maintained only in Viena, where it appears as a distinct narrative sequence integrated into the cycle. Following the world-creation, Väinämöinen washes ashore in Pohjola and weeps. The Mistress of Pohjola finds him: she demands a *sampo* to be forged in exchange for returning Väinä to his own realm. Väinä declares that he cannot do this and agrees to send Ilmari in his place. Väinä is sent back to the world, where he sings a magical spruce in the top of which is a gold-

breasted martin. He visits Ilmarinen and draws him out to see this animal, provoking the smith to climb the tree and catch it. Once Ilmarinen is in the tree, Väinämöinen sings and the smith is carried away in the boat of the wind and left in Pohjola, where he immediately complies with the request to make the *sampo*.

For many singers, this sequence probably seemed as obscure and peculiar as it does to us: it was dropping out of use, simplified without the image of the tree and the deception (e.g. Väinä simply tells Ilmari to go to Pohjola and forge a *sampo*) or the episode could be eliminated entirely (e.g. Väinä makes the *sampo* himself). However odd and tale-like, it appears to be unique to this mythological narrative in all known Finnic traditions, suggesting its peculiarity is a consequence of historical removal from contexts in which it was mythically meaningful rather than because it has been adapted from popular and entertaining models of other narratives or genres. The probability of historical continuity is complemented by correspondences in structure, narrative function and individual motifs with the Germanic mythological narrative describing Loki's orchestration of the kidnapping of the goddess Iðunn in the acquisition of her apples of youth – a narrative sequence that appears correspondingly exclusive to the context of a single mythological narrative in the Germanic tradition (see Frog 2010a: 123–126 for sources and discussion).

In both narratives, the protagonist is miserable and helpless in an otherworld location where he is at the mercy of another mythic being. This mythic being is a ruler or authority of the otherworld location and associated with chthonic forces. (The narrative sequence producing this condition appears independent for each tradition.) The protagonist asks to be released or returned to his own realm. The adversary desires an object associated with life and fertility (the *sampo* / Iðunn's apples). The adversary demands the member of the protagonist's community who is associated with the desired object in exchange for the protagonist's return home. The protagonist agrees and holds to his agreement after gaining his freedom without impending threats or further compulsion. The protagonist uses a trick to send the member of his community to the otherworld location by creating or claiming that there is an exceptionally desirable object in a tree and lures the victim to that tree. The deception is successful and a third party removes the deceived individual from the tree to the otherworld by flight. The protagonist later organizes and accomplishes the recovery of the lost object/individual from the otherworld location (in an independent narrative sequence). In each tradition, the core motif-complex of the narrative sequence is identical and fulfils the same function in a larger story pattern: *a*) the protagonist becomes a hostage; *b*) the protagonist situates the desired object in the otherworld; *c*) the protagonist recovers the object from the otherworld. The correspondences between these two narratives are too great to be accidental, especially when each is identified unambiguously and exclusively with the vernacular mythology in each tradition. The ability of this complex narrative sequence to persist in such a clearly recognizable form in kalevalaic mythology (and probably also in Germanic mythology) appears attributable to its role within the broader story-pattern: it centrally

fills a functional capacity (transferring Ilmari to Pohjola to forge the *sampo* following the world-creation so that the *sampo* can be stolen), allowing it to remain suspended with little or no semantic weight even when the significance of its images became opaque. (Frog 2010a: 122–127.)

Just as the Germanic myth marginalizes the role of Iðunn, this narrative sequence appears centrally concerned with Väinämöinen. Ilmarinen's prominence as forger of the *sampo* is compromised first by being orchestrated by Väinä and second by situating the *sampo* in a chthonic otherworld location from which it must be recovered. Väinä's authority over Ilmari is foregrounded first in a manipulative magical deception, and second by staging the sea-raid that makes Väinä – not Ilmari – responsible for introducing the *sampo* into the world. This is generally consistent with Väinä's centrality in the world-creation (from which it appears **Ilmari* was "deleted"), on the sea-raid (where Ilmari is a subordinate figure) and in the battle over the *sampo* (in which Ilmari does not necessarily participate at all). Although the underlying narrative model or referent is obscure, the account of Ilmari forging the *sampo* has been integrated into a frame that seems to have been significant in presenting Väinä's authority and significance over him. Within the context of the *tietäjä*-mythology, this presents a high probability that Germanic models may not have been limited to conceptual adaptations, such as the integration of the creation of the first land from the corpse of a murdered anthropomorphic being. The striking parallels with the Germanic narrative may reflect an adaptation of narrative material to fulfil structural functions with potentially unrelated rhetorical strategies (i.e. asserting the authority of the deceiver over the deceived) within the broader narrative pattern of the Sampo-Cycle.

The "Blind Shooter" and Complex Narrative Models

The preceding considerations regarding intertextuality and the adaptation of mythological narrative material provide a background against which it is now possible to consider potential narrative material in conjunction with which the creation of the first land from the corpse of a murdered anthropomorphic being may have been introduced into *The Song of Creation*. A Germanic model for the identification of the first land from the corpse of the murdered anthropomorphic *Ymir*-being would be consistent with the semiotic centrality of this conceptual schema in Germanic (as opposed to Baltic) traditions (cf. Clunies Ross 1987: 113, 118–119, 125–126, 136–137). However, details of Ymir's murder have not been preserved.

In northern redactions, the instigating event of *The Song of Creation* is the shooting of Väinämöinen by a mysterious "blind shooter" figure. The blind shooter is a widespread mythic image in European traditions that can be ideally characterized as a mythic archer or spear-caster who cannot see but inevitably hits his mark. The appearance of this figure in the world-creation cannot be attributed to a FU heritage. The mythic image is bound up with the motif that the successful shot has a tragic, murderous effect (Honko 1959a: 135–141, 1959b, O'Donoghue 2003). The blind shooter

image held a vital position in North Finnic incantation traditions describing the origins of magic shot (illness arrows) (Franssila 1900: 462–472). It also appears in another epic, *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, for the slayer of the hero who is later resurrected, where it occurs in a narrative adapted from (probably later) Germanic models, as I have discussed extensively elsewhere (Frog 2010a: see esp. 340–364).

In *The Song of Creation*, the blind shooter is an unnamed *lappalainen* [literally 'Sámi person'; poetic 'hostile other'] (on ethnonyms used in this way, cf. Mišarina, this volume). He hates Väinämöinen without explanation. The verbal description interacted with the "blind shooter" of the incantation tradition. (Kuusi 1949: 148–156.) In Viena, the shooting occurs when Väinä is riding a mythic animal, which he has magically created (probably a motif from the PF heritage: Lintrop 2010). It is rare in regions to the south, where the shooting occasionally appears in contexts disassociated from the world-creation, and then disappears completely. Within the documented corpus, this unnamed figure fills a single, brief function in the whole of the mythology. He appears to be suspended in the tradition owing to the narrative pragmatics surrounding that function: his identity is secondary to being the shooter who instigates the creation of the world. This occurs within a constellation of motifs associated with the shooting-event that characterizes Northern European blind-shooter traditions. These include, for example, the unsuspecting, unconcealed victim and the victim's body ending up in water. The comprehensive narrative complex is difficult to assess because rather than a uniform distribution or fluid cross-cultural variation, the diverse forms appear to exhibit independent parallels with the Germanic tradition that seems to stand at their center, and is also the only other tradition in which the shooting-event has cosmological proportions within the broader mythology. (Frog 2010a: 267–270, 302–305, 357–364.)

The Germanic tradition is documented as attached to the dying god Baldr ['(Warrior-Band) Leader/Lord']. Comparison with this material is problematic because the traditions may have been significantly restructured during the Migration Period (ca. 300–600 A.D.), which is the era that the narrative system is first attested in iconographic representations (Hauck 1970, Frog 2010a: 257–262). The restructured form may not have become established immediately or in a uniform manner across all North Germanic cultural areas. (North 1997, Frog forthcoming.) Rather than initiating the event of the world-creation, Baldr's death by a blind shooter figure banishes him to a chthonic realm of death and anticipates the vernacular eschatology – in which the earth sinks *back* into a primal sea and the motifs of the creation are realized in the *re*birth of the world. In other words, rather than death and resurrection as an immediate sequence, the Baldr-tradition is characterized by a delay for the duration of the present world order paralleling the delay between the Christian Crucifixion and the Second Coming of Christ. In addition to connecting this event with the motif of the raised earth from the primal sea, it presents the preservation of anthropomorphic beings on that sea in wood or trees,[49] just as Väinä is described to float on the primal waters (above), and it may have included a model for the victim's mythic ride.[50] Moreover, both figures arrive in a

chthonic realm where they are at the mercy of a female mythic figure. This figure both provides them with hospitality and ransoms them for return to the world of the living. "Weeping" is also a motif essential to both narrative traditions, albeit in different roles: Baldr is ransomed (in the preserved corpus) for the weeping of all things whereas Väinä is ransomed for a member of his own community (above) but his own weeping leads him to be found by the female figure (Kuusi 1949: 161–162, 170–178). (See further Frog 2010a: 264–267.)

The Germanic material is highly problematic for comparison because the traditions associated with Baldr seem to have been restructured and reinterpreted in ways that separate them from whatever Germanic models may have been encountered by the *tietäjä*-institution. Moreover, the tradition associated with Baldr may also be an intertextual adaptation of a traditional world-creation tradition (of which no developed accounts survive), particularly when it anticipates the rebirth of the world through a repetition of creation images following the vernacular apocalypse.[51] In any case, parallels extend far beyond a superficial image of the blind shooter to account for almost all significant elements in *The Song of Creation* except the formation of the earth from an anthropomorphic being, and the combination of earth-diver and world-egg material attributable to the PF heritage. This is far too comprehensive to be considered accidental: it suggests a historical relationship between these traditions as comprehensive narrative systems into which the latter elements of the PF heritage were integrated (as *The Forging of the Sampo* integrated material related to **Ilmari*'s forging into a Germanic narrative frame). The comparison becomes particularly striking for several reasons. First, the narrative material adapted extends beyond the world-creation event to Väinä's helpless state in Pohjola. In this case, the textual entity of *The Song of Creation* that became dominant across North Finnic cultural areas was not simply an independent narrative "attached" to the Sampo-Cycle (cf. Kuusi 1949): it most probably took this shape as an integrated episode of the Sampo-Cycle. Second, it appears fully integrated as the instigating event of *The Forging of the Sampo*, situating Väinä to be ransomed for the *sampo* and Ilmari, consistent with their integrated development in the formation of the Sampo-Cycle. Third, taken together, the vast majority of narrative material in *The Song of Creation* and *The Forging of the Sampo* appear adapted into a narrative whole on the basis of early Germanic models. These may have been adapted according to much the same intertextual strategies as the description of creating the *sampo* or the adaptations of the earth-diver and world-egg motifs – i.e. emerging *in relation to* conventional and recognizable myths. (On this particular combination in Circum-Baltic context, see further Frog 2010a: 352–364.) Finally, the absence of a dualist structure in the world-creation is further highlighted: not only is the sky-god of an FU diver-myth absent; Väinä is simultaneously victim *and* demiurge in what should be two roles from the IE model. Väinä emerges unequivocally as the dominant figure.

Intertextual Referents Obscured by Time

Although *The Song of Creation* and the narrative material surrounding the death of the Germanic god Baldr prove fruitful for comparison, the transformations and adaptations in each tradition have obscured the possibility of approaching the underlying referent in anything like concrete terms. Instead, the picture that emerges is much more abstract not unlike that of traditions connected to the smith of heaven – if less fragmented. Approaching narrative material that may stand in the background of *The Theft of the Sampo* proves still more complicated and problematic. The challenges posed by this material are increased by the shaping of images and motifs through the construction of intertextual relationships between songs of the Sampo-Cycle itself, even if those discussed above only relate to the final pursuit and confrontation with the adversary. Precisely this song has nevertheless received the most attention in comparative discussion and been generally agreed to be marked by influence from Germanic models, especially as maritime raiding was not only completely foreign to the forested inland regions of Karelia where the tradition was most richly preserved, but also because sea-raids were perceived as particularly characteristic of "Vikings". This discussion therefore requires some opening here.

The most remarkable comparison was drawn by Nils Lid (1949). He compared the *sampo*-raid with a popular story-pattern of the medieval Scandinavian mytho-heroic saga tradition, which describes a sea-raid on a (pagan) temple. Lid focuses on a remarkably dense concentration of specific parallels in *Bósa saga* ['The Saga of Bósi'], treating it as an exemplar of the story-pattern. Comparison with *Bósa saga* has been repeated by a number of Finnish scholars (e.g. Haavio 1952, Kuusi 1963, Siikala 2002a). However, it breaks down under scrutiny because *Bósa saga*'s use of the story-pattern is exceptional (see Power 1984): this is a 14th or 15th century Icelandic literary parody of the genre without basis on a traditional hero, and it draws on a remarkable range of traditions not normally recorded or referenced in writing, manipulating them as referents for comic effect. (Vésteinn Ólason 1994, van Wezel 2006, Frog 2011d: 25–27.) Features that exhibit the closest correspondences to the Sampo-Cycle are not otherwise attested for the story-pattern or in Old Norse traditions more generally. *Bósa saga* could be adapting an unknown myth that had earlier provided a model for the Sampo-Cycle, but many of the points of comparison are suspiciously specific, such as the exceptional name *Smiðr* ['Smith'] for one of the three heroes and a mythic egg as the treasure acquired on the raid and [inexplicably] broken like the *sampo* at the conclusion of the saga. When the essential features under comparison are fully integrated into North Finnic belief traditions but held "no place in Norse religious life" (Tolley 1995: 80), it seems probable that the Sampo-Cycle was one of the exceptional range of traditions manipulated by the saga author (see also Tolley 1995: 79–80). This does not invalidate the comparison with the story-pattern, but it reduces comparison to a very broad and general paradigm.

The theft of the *sampo* has a much longer history of comparison with the

Germanic mythic mill *Grotti* (e.g. Grimm 1845: 87–89, Castrén 1853: 273–275). This mill was possessed by a mytho-heroic king who had it grind out peace and prosperity for his kingdom, until his kingdom was attacked and the mill stolen and lost in the sea – much as the *sampo* (conceived as a mill) ground out prosperity for Pohjola until the raid by kalevalaic heroes. Like the *sampo*, Grotti also became identified as the source of the sea's saltiness. (See further Tolley 2008.) As in tale-type ATU 565 "The Magic Mill", Grotti is possessed by the protagonist and stolen from him rather than being a mythic object retrieved from the otherworld (a central theme of Germanic myths). Rather than exhibiting a common story-pattern, this structural difference limits comparison to the magic prosperity-producing object that is stolen and lost in the sea. Again, this does not invalidate comparison, but it only indicates the presence of the mythic image(s) connected with certain motifs in both cultures. This is probably neither random nor accidental, but rather than either tradition influencing the other in the later Middle Ages, it is more likely indicative of this narrative core having a longer history in the Circum-Baltic region not unlike traditions of the smith of heaven.

A significant (if frequently ignored) issue with both the above comparisons is an incongruity in the status and role of the tradition in each culture. The story-pattern of the mytho-heroic sagas is connected with a particular genre and is clearly connected to the adventures of men rather than gods or mythology. Although Grotti is clearly a mythic object, it is also connected to human history and lacks cosmological import: "It assumes an aura of the cosmic [...] only by allusion" (Tolley 2008: 22). Although the same narrative may easily appear in different cultures varying in status between myth and tale (cf. Briggs & Bauman 1992: 134), status as "myth" tends not to be retained when crossing linguistic-cultural thresholds unless both cultures participate in a common belief system and/or ideology (such as Christianity), or unless the introduction of the narrative material is associated with changes in the belief system and/or ideology (e.g. conversion) (Frog 2010a: 230–237, 2012b: 46–47). This significantly reduces the likelihood that *The Theft of the Sampo* has adapted a generic mytho-heroic story-pattern or the tradition and image of Grotti from that genre. An advance in mythic status to a myth of cosmological proportions therefore seems highly improbable, particularly in light of the much stronger evidence of models adapted for *The Song of Creation* and *The Forging of the Sampo* that are unambiguously associated with the mythological tradition. However, many Germanic mytho-heroic narratives employed mythological narrative material as intertextual referents, loading their accounts with meaning-potential and rhetorical force (see Frog 2010a: 271–307). It is thus not improbable that Grotti and/or the heroic story-pattern could be rooted in such intertextual strategies. Their parallels to *The Theft of the Sampo* could thus reflect different connections to traditions in an earlier period.

The possibility of a mythological tradition somewhere in the background of Grotti is supported by a number of references to a cosmic mill in Germanic traditions. Much like PF **Ilmari*'s forging of the vault of heaven, this tradition seems to have lost currency and centrality, but the sources are far more limited and problematic.[52] Conceptions of a mythic mill

as a "thunder-instrument" essential to rain and the maintenance of life seems also to underlie the mysterious Circum-Baltic mythological narrative known as the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument (or tale-type ATU 1148b), as I have discussed elsewhere (Frog 2011a). Although its background is obscure, being neither IE nor FU (although cf. Puhvel 2004: 28), this tradition seems to have been both widespread and extremely central in an earlier period, established in Baltic, Germanic, North and South Finnic and Sámi, with traces also in Komi and early Greek. It was potentially central enough in an earlier period to have marked the mythological lexicon – e.g. the Latvian thunder-god Perkōns' lightning-weapon called *milna* ['quern-handle; stick'] (Mühlenbach & Endzelīn 1923–1932 II: 627), and the etymological association of Thor's weapon *Mjǫllnir* with "milling" (West 2007: 253–254) – and prior to the assertion of Ukko with the *tietäjä*-institution, the likely PF protagonist would presumably be **Ilmari*, making an intertextual use both relevant and interesting.

In this case, the essential structure of the relevant episode corresponds to the theft of the *sampo*: the god journeys to a chthonic otherworld location to acquire by deception or theft a mythic mill-object associated with fertility. In addition, the traditions share motifs not found in the material above: the mythic object is locked away to make it unattainable; the theft occurs while the possessor is asleep. The former is without clear motivation in the case of the *sampo*, but is so common that it holds almost no weight. The theft during sleep is far more unusual and is essential to the pragmatics of the Sampo-Cycle, but in the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument it was connected with the theft from the god rather than the acquisition from the otherworld (Frog 2011a: esp. 92). It does not necessarily follow from such minimal comparisons that the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument provided a model for *The Theft of the Sampo* or even for the theft-sequence within that song.

Among the rich evidence of diverse vernacular and foreign narratives and images which appear to have intertextually informed every other episode in the emergence of the Sampo-Cycle, it is precisely here, at the heart of the Sampo-Cycle in the account of the theft itself that evidence of models is lacking. Probable intertextual manipulations of traditions throughout the rest of the Sampo-Cycle imply that material was similarly manipulated here, even if the particular material cannot be identified. The parallels brought forward in Germanic mytho-heroic material are complemented by the Circum-Baltic Theft of the Thunder-Instrument tradition in highlighting the potential complexity of the history of narrative traditions with which *The Theft of the Sampo* originally interfaced. Scattered and obscure Germanic evidence suggests that there were traditions associated with a magic mill that produced fertility or resources connected to the mythological sphere, although these appear quite peripheral to documented evidence and may have largely dropped out of use or been radically transformed as a historical process. Rather than *The Theft of the Sampo* drawing on any of these narrative traditions directly, all of them may reflect diverse and radical adaptations of antecedent traditions that spread cross-culturally in much earlier ethnocultural substrata like the **Dyéus*-reflex → **Deiwós*-reflex shift mentioned above. However, just because we cannot identify a single,

concrete underlying narrative model does not justify an extreme opposing view that there was no such model and that the parallels simply result from the superficial and accidental free recombination of common minimal traditional elements. Although the mytho-heroic story pattern described by Lid is rather general and difficult to trace historically, the particular form of tale-type ATU 565 "The Magic Mill" accounting for the origin of the sea's saltiness exhibits a continuity in the Circum-Baltic region of at least 700 years from its earliest medieval documentation (cf. also Johnston 1908–1909) whereas the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument exhibits a clear cross-cultural continuity as a mythological narrative over more than 1400 years from its earliest documentation. This would be inconsistent with the superficial and accidental free recombination of their elements over time, and both traditions may have had long histories before they were first recorded. Similarly, evidence from other material in the Sampo-Cycle suggests concrete and even strategic use of specific contemporary traditions. However, in this case, the underlying history of this material in the Circum-Baltic may be so protracted and complex that it cannot be resolved into a single coherent picture.

Perspectives

The preceding discussion has highlighted that North Finnic kalevalaic mythology has roots extending back to a PFU and even a PU linguistic-cultural heritage, and also that this heritage has been repeatedly intersected by radical developments and revisions through potentially vast social networks of language and dialect communities. Situating these developments in relation to one another on a continuum model in relation to ethnocultural substrata offers insights into these processes. Although the earliest strata of development remain obscure, this provides a context for the potential remarkableness of internal developments such as PFU **Ilma* > PF **Ilma-r*(*i*) and loans such as Indo-Iranian **Daivas* > PF **taiwas* while revealing the potential scope of many later developments. Concentration has been on two ethnocultural substrata associated with new technologies: iron-working, which redefined the god **Ilmari*, and the language-based technology of incantations, which redefined **Väinä* and also other figures. The assessment of **Ilmari* and the smith of heaven identity remained highly abstract, but provided an essential frame for addressing later changes which appear to have displaced this figure from his inherited role as sky-god for the first time since PFU. It thus appears that the core of his identity expanded from "dominant sky-god" to incorporate an identity as "mythic smith" and this core was narrowed under the *tietäjä*-institution to "mythic smith" with the god Ukko being exclusively asserted in the identity of "dominant sky god". PF **Ilmari*'s probable antithesis **Väinä* was elevated to centrality as the cultural model for this new institution of ritual specialist as part of the same process according to Germanic identity-models accompanying the technology of incantations and its associated ideology.

The *tietäjä*-institution appears to have emerged as part of a complex package of cultural material including the technology of incantations and associated rite techniques. This package included conceptual models of the body, illness, cosmology and strategies for interaction with the unseen world, mythic images, and mythological narrative material. This institution, its technology and affiliated mythic models were introduced to North Finnic cultures where mythological systems were already established. The assimilation of the technology of incantations simultaneously exhibits a contrastive relationship to the institution of vernacular shamanism with which it was probably competing. The shamanic institution was presumably oriented to the dominant sky-god PF **Ilmari*. Insofar as narrative is a tool in the construction, communication and negotiation of the identities of mythic figures and their relationships, it becomes possible to situate changes in mythological narrative traditions in relation to social processes. The competing institutions did not simply maintain incompatible ideologies: kalevalaic mythology can be considered a *tietäjä*-mythology, and tensions and contrasts between ideologies were realized through the semiotics of mythic discourse in the epics themselves (see further Frog 2010a: 191–196). Thus, the mythic bird into which the Mistress of Pohjola transforms for the final battle could be referred to as a *vaakalintu* , a term related to a shamanic spirit-form or a particularly dangerous shamanic helping spirit of Sámi tradition.[53] The bird-form of this battle, adversary of the cultural archetype of the *tietäjä*, could even be objectified in the manner of a shamanic helping spirit (Kuusi 1949: 204).

Mythological narratives in this tradition are employed to construct Väinä(möinen) as an identity-model for the *tietäjä* as well as to provide resources for and origins of the institution. The Sampo-Cycle has a central role in these processes, asserting Väinä as the ultimate authority of knowledge of the cosmology to the exclusion of potentially competing figures. The Sampo-Cycle also plays an essential role in constructing the relationship to Ilmari(nen). This becomes more apparent when the narrative material is situated on a continuum model: Ilmari's inherited role in an FU dualist world-creation appears to have been deleted, his role as smith-demiurge has been removed to the creation of the *sampo* in a chthonic otherworld, and he remains a secondary figure subordinate to Väinämöinen in the concluding sea-raid. While Ilmari's role has been diminished and marginalized, Väinä is foregrounded as the exclusive demiurge, he orchestrates the creation of the *sampo* by Ilmari (who remains passive and compliant), and becomes responsible for the position and role of the *sampo* in the current world order. Rather than three songs that emerged as independent entities, these songs look more likely to have emerged as an interrelated system – and as an aggressive reconfiguration of contemporary mythology. They also isolate Ilmari from his role as a celestial god allowing that to be filled by the thunder-god Ukko. The developments in narrative traditions should thus not be considered independent of the competing institutions associated with each figure.

The spread of the *tietäjä*-institution can be directly connected with the spread of the repertoire of essential textual entities of narrative mythology

and incantations essential to the tradition. The Germanic influences and their connection to non-Christian mythology and ideology make it likely that this process was largely accomplished before Christianity became dominant. As such, this would (loosely speaking) situate it in the Viking Age or earlier. Anna-Leena Siikala (2002a) points to the Merovingian Period – the centuries preceding the Viking Age – as a period when Germanic contacts were at their height, although she stresses that the processes may have already begun much earlier. The evidence presents only the outcomes of the diachronic processes. The actual spread of the *tietäjä*-institution and associated repertoire of mythological poetry must have occurred once this institution and its mythology had already taken shape and become established. In the Merovingian Period, North Finnic groups appear to have inhabited only limited territories around what is now southern Finland and Karelia. This immediately preceded migrations from western Finland to Karelia and the break-up of the North Finnic dialect continuum. (Kallio, forthcoming.) The process remains obscure, but this seems a likely period across which the *tietäjä*-institution became established throughout North Finnic linguistic-cultural groups. Subsequently, it advanced north with the language. It is unlikely that vernacular shamanism immediately fell out of use. A discussion of how the introduction of Christianity may have impacted these processes will be reserved for address elsewhere (Frog 2012c).

The *tietäjä*-mythology appears to have received truly remarkable influences and models from Germanic culture. Rather than Germanic elements being integrated into the vernacular system, evidence of the Sampo-Cycle suggests that the most central and compelling elements of the inherited cosmology (the earth-diver, the world-egg, the forging of the celestial sphere) were integrated and (perhaps quite extensively) adapted into complex and extended Germanic narrative models. This may seem remarkable, but the "package" of mythological material circulating cross-culturally in the Baltic Sea region was probably no less extensive. On the one hand, this suggests that the *tietäjä*-mythology is a new and unique synthesis owing to cultural contacts that stimulated mythic discourses to produce the characteristic dominant mythology of North Finnic cultural areas. On the other hand, it also suggests that the *tietäjä* mythology is unlikely to be generally representative of the mythology of the earlier traditions of vernacular shamanism (see also Frog 2011c: 34–35). The difference between these mythologies is so great that the social process of transition between these institutions cannot have been accomplished without resistance and must have been akin to a conversion process. It is precisely that process, arising from a confluence of FU and IE cultures, that gave rise to this uniquely North Finnic tradition of kalevalaic mythology.

NOTES

1 Designations such as "Sampo-Cycle" (*Sampojakso*) and "Sampo-Epic" (*Sampo-eepos*) are products of academic discourses. These and other designations for the vernacular songs and narrative sequences have become conventional and practical terms of reference for discussion.
2 See e.g. Krohn 1903–1910, Setälä 1932, Harva 1943, Kuusi 1949.
3 This analysis excluded the relevant (if problematic) Ingrian material, much of which Kuusi addressed in other contexts (Kuusi 1956, 1979, 1994b). This material, with the examples recorded later in the 20th century, raises the corpus as defined by Kuusi to ca. 900 items (Kuusi 1994b). Although concrete figures help frame the size of the corpus, the versatility of the Sampo-Cycle problematizes the reality of delimiting the corpus and necessitates approaching the Sampo-Cycle in relation to other circulating poetry, and other kalevalaic epic material in particular.
4 See, for example, Harvilahti & Rahimova's (this volume) discussion on one of Martti Haavio's studies.
5 It is noteworthy that work which has been done more recently on the *sampo* has been, for example, from the perspective of linguistics (e.g. Koivulehto 1999), comparative religion with a strong linguistic emphasis (e.g. Anttonen 2000) or comparative studies centrally focused on traditions of another culture (e.g. Tolley 1995, 2009).
6 Karjalainen 1922: 292, Munkácsi & Kálmán 1986: 657–659, Kulemzin et al. 2006: 141–142.
7 On **tōrəm*, see e.g. Sutrop 2003: 44–49; on **juma* see e.g. Joki 1973: 90–91.
8 This phenomenon was most strongly maintained within a broad, multicultural isogloss (Eliade 1958: 58–64; cf. Harva 1923: 140–153).
9 A corresponding phenomenon may have been established in Proto-Indo-European (PIE) (cf. Eliade 1958: 66–77), but Indo-European (IE) languages appear to have begun disambiguating reflexes of PIE **Dyéus* ['Sky'] from **dyéus* ['sky'] much earlier (cf. West 2007: 166–170).
10 The significance of cultural adjacence is generally recognized on the level of language, from the lexicon and grammar to phonetics and pragmatics (cf. Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001). Cultural adjacence has been suggested as significant to a number of cultural phenomena, from whole genres like epic singing (Bailey & Ivanova 1998: xxxvii), the semiotics and stylistics of particular genres from lament poetry (Stepanova 2011) to embroidery (V. Survo, this volume), as well as acoustic aesthetic features in poetics like alliteration more generally (Roper 2009: 90–92). A more general hypothesis on this phenomenon is still being developed (cf. Frog & Stepanova 2011: 209–211, Frog 2010b: 26–27, Frog 2011a).
11 Hultkrantz 1996; cf. Harva 1922: 9–33, Eliade 1964: 259–266.
12 See Vajde 1959, Hultkrantz 1973; cf. Eliade 1964, Siikala 1978, Hoppál 2010: 29–31.
13 On **taiwas* < Indo-Iranian **daivas*, see Joki 1973: 323; cf. Kulmar 2005: 23–24; on *sampas* < Indo-Iranian **stambhas* or **skambhas*, see Kalima 1933, Koivulehto 1999: 227, 230, Parpola 2006; cf. however Joki 1973: 118–119; cf. also Vedic *Stambha*/*Skambha* ['The Support; world pillar'], possibly a nominal derivative of the verb used to describe Indra propping apart heaven and earth (Irwin 1976: 740).
14 Setälä 1932, Harva 1943, Loorits 1949–1952 I: 401, Tolley 2009: 275–276; cf. Siikala 2007: 35–37.
15 For a possible piece of evidence that this development did not penetrate Seto, see Frog 2012a: n.7.
16 Uotila 1942; Lauri Hakulinen (1961: 161–162 and 112–114, 124–125) observes that this suffix could be produced by the earlier diminutive *-ra* + *-i*.

17 Cf. Jorma Koivulehto's observations in Salo 2006: 77–78.
18 I am thankful to Janne Saarikivi for pointing out the probable relationship between Finnic *Ilmari* and Udmurt *Inmar*.
19 See Salo 1992: 103–107, 2010: 117–125; cf. Hofstra 1985: 322–324, Salo 1990: 107–114, 118, 2006: 30–31.
20 Attested in North and South Finnic (cf. Kuusi 1949: 149, 1994b: 62).
21 The vault of heaven attested in North Finnic (Krohn 1915: 308–309, Haavio 1967: 136–137, Tarkka 2005: 183–184); the sun attested in Baltic (Laurinkienė 2008); connected to the creation of the celestial realm in Germanic (*Vǫluspá* 7).
22 Attested in North Finnic (Krohn 1917: 82–85, Piela 1989: 85–86), although an aetiology of iron can be reasonably postulated to have circulated in conjunction with the technology.
23 Attested in Finnic, Baltic and Germanic (see Frog 2011c: 30–31 for sources).
24 Attested in North Finnic and Baltic (Aarne 1920, Kuusi 1979, Laurinkienė 2008, Frog 2011c: 32; cf. Harris 1976 [2008]).
25 "Nails" had been introduced with bronze artefacts (Salo 2006: 53–54), but bronze was not used for fire-striking. If the "nail"-star is derivative of a Bronze Age ethnocultural substratum, its role was significantly revised with its identification as iron and that revised role appears to have been adapted cross-culturally.
26 Harva 1923: 10–12, 18, 23, 1943: 30–33, Kettunen 1938: 241, Loorits 1949–1953 I: 391–392, Drobin & Keinänen 2001: 145–147, Tolley 2009: 275–276, Frog 2011c: 30–31; on the terms for "nail", see Hofstra 1986: 322–323, Kylstra et al. 1991–II: 295. On the term "nail-star" appearing independently in a remote group of cultures (Čukči, etc.), see Frog 2012a; regarding lightning as the god's "fire", cf. Rydving 2010: 98.
27 For a brief summary of the North Finnic data, see Sarmela 1994: 128–129; on Livonian, suspended in riddles, see Loorits 1926: 51–52; on Latvian, suspended in riddles and *daina* poetry, see Biezais 1972: 105–106, 125–128; on comparison with the Germanic narrative, see Krohn 1885, Krohn 1917: 125–127, Frog 2010a: 334 (N.B. – early sources present remarkably little connection between Thor and thunder, storm, weather, or other atmospheric phenomena in myth: see Chadwick 1900: 24–25); for synthesis, see Frog 2011c: 31–32, 2012c.
28 See Harva 1948: 74–102; for a summary in English, see Salo 2006: 8–12; on the problem of the underlying name, see also Haavio 1959: 96–100, 1967: 161–164; for comparison with Sámi, see Rydving 2010: 93–103.
29 Loorits 1949–1957 II: 5, Salo 1990, Valk 1996, Siikala 2002a, Salo 2006, Frog 2011a.
30 On the relationship to the *tietäjä*, see Haavio 1967: 326–361, Siikala 2002a: 203–208; as an object of ritual, see Krohn 1933: 33–40, Harva 1948: 102–122.
31 From Germanic (e.g. Collinder 1932: 11–12, de Vries 1961: *s.v.* 'dyna 2') or Slavic (e.g. Vilkuna 1948: 283–284, Viisto 1990: 147, Koivulehto 1990: 153, Kallio 2006: 160). These etymologies concern hydronyms for the Western Dvina, rarely considering the relationship of the hydronym to the PF noun and related theonym.
32 E.g. Krohn 1903–1910: 354–356, 375, 416, 791, Homlberg [Harva] 1913: 212–215, Haavio 1952: 226–229.
33 The simplex *Väinä* generated terms for other beings and locations (e.g. *Väinölä*, *Väinötär*) paralleled by *Tuoni* (e.g. *Tuonela*, *Tuonetar*), the Finnic mistress/lord of the realm of the dead (see Stepanova, this volume), and similar terms appear to have been generated from **Ilma* (e.g. *Ilmola*) rather than **Ilma-ri*. See also Frog 2012c.
34 See further Frog 2012c; cf. Frog 2010a: 184–185, 191–196, 2012c. When such combinations occur across ideological thresholds, these appear most often to reflect a villainization of the "other" (cf. Sámi *Ilmaris*).
35 See Siikala 2002c: 32, Tarkka 2005: 86, 150–151, 175–183, Frog 2010c: 24–29; cf. Frog 2011b: 9.

36 Haavio 1967: 313–314, Sarmela 1994: 121–122, Siikala 2002a: 20, Rédei et al. 1986–1988: 307–308.

37 For an example of competing institutions of ritual specialist, see Siikala 1980.

38 Siikala (1990b: 202, 2002a: 277) has considered the unique description of a *tietäjä* going on a soul-journey in an unconscious trance to reflect an aspect of the *tietäjä* tradition. Within the broader context of conceptions of the separable soul and penetrable body in this tradition, I interpret this as directly comparable to the isolated example of a *tietäjä* using a drum in magical performance, where the drum was explicitly acquired from a Sámi (Siikala 1990b: 202–203, Siikala 2002a: 278). Such examples of adopting Sámi strategies on an individual basis emphasize that these strategies were *excluded* from the institution in social negotiation as a historical process.

39 See further Frog 2010a: 137, 232; 2010c: 21; 2011c: 32–34; on "conduits" of transmission of traditions, see von Sydow 1948: 12, Dégh & Vázsonyi 1975.

40 This may find support in the bird landing on the ship in *Creating the Island*, which may reflect a synthesis of Väinämöinen's ship with the first land raised from his own body as symbolically identified motifs (see below).

41 This is distinct from the sky-god being in complex forms of the narrative and absent from simplified versions.

42 The diver motif in this Germanic material, at the periphery of the isogloss discussed by Napolskikh (this volume), is most probably attributable to models in Finno-Ugric cultures (cf. Frog 2010a: 264–267).

43 SKS KRA Syntytaru card catalogue, group Maailmansynty; cf. Holmberg [Harva] 1927: 313–322.

44 Uther 2004 I: 334–335, Kuusi 1949: 145, 1994b: 58–59, Tarkka 2005: 174; cf. Aarne 1909: 81–82, Tolley 2008: 17–18.

45 Krohn 1903–1910: 184–186, Setälä 1932: 79–80, 119–120, 182–183, 478–491, Kuusi 1949: 256–260, 277–284, Rausmaa 1964: 40–44.

46 This was likely the case in the Ižorian tradition of Ingria: see Aarne 1920, Setälä 1932: 129–146, Kuusi 1979, Frog 2010a: 94, 308–310, 315.

47 There is one other epic which appears to engage *The Song of Creation* with corresponding intertextual strategies: *The Song of Lemminkäinen* (Frog 2010a: 269–270).

48 See Kuusi 1949. Ilmarinen's dominant position in this narrative appears to have been maintained owing to his significance as an identity model for "man" and masculinity, reflected, for example, in the use of his name as an epithet for the groom in wedding verses (see Krohn 1924–1928 III: 147, Tarkka 2005: 194–195).

49 This is a basic Germanic conceptual identification: see Clunies Ross 1987: 108–110, Tolley 2009: 346–349, Frog 2010a: 264–265.

50 Neckel 1920: 242–245, North 1997, Frog 2010a: 174–175, 179–185, 358–359.

51 The correspondences between creation motifs consequent to the "prime" murder of the first being Ymir and the "prime" murder of a positive anthropomorphic being (god, man, elf, etc.) through Baldr suggest a conceptual identification of the slayings and symbolic intertextual relationship between their narratives. A direct or indirect association between Ymir and the blind shooter is therefore implied. (See also Frog 2010a: 164–167.) Such a connection is potentially supported by North Finnic traditions of *Jumi* (*Jymi*, *Jummi*) (see Harva 1948: 472–475), cognate with *Ymir*, identified as the mythic blind shooter, which could be an Iron Age loan from a dialect of Proto-Norse (rather than from the Latvian cognate *Jumis* [Oinas 1980, 1981; cf. *SKES* 123]). This loan could account for the North Finnic identification of this figure as the blind shooter, as well as the term's North Finnic use in expressions for becoming fixed / balanced / stable and unmoving or immovable (cf. the establishment of the first earth on the primal sea). I am thankful to Janne Saarikivi for discussing this possible etymology with me, and

for emphasizing the need for a detailed analysis of relevant forms and dialects in which *Jumi* appears.

52 See Tolley 1995: 69–77, 2008: 18–22, 2009: 295–303; cf. Hakamies, this volume.

53 Kuusi 1949: 202–203, 206–208, 258, cf. 195; on the term and concept *vaakalintu*, see Toivonen 1944: 110–128, Siikala 2002a: 235–237; cf. Setälä 1932: 295–297, Harva 1943: 117–127, Rydving 2010: 125, 128, 131.

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Genre, Gender and Mythic Patterns

III

Eila Stepanova

Mythic Elements of Karelian Laments

The Case of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet*[*]

This paper approaches the intersection of "mythic images" and poetic "register" through the examples of *syndyzet*[1] and *spuassuzet*[2] and their semantic fields as encountered in Karelian laments. The term *syndyzet* (diminutive plural derived from *synty* ['origin, birth, emergence']) reveals conceptions of the otherworld as a realm of the dead and its inhabitants, and is also related to divine powers. *Spuassuzet* (diminutive plural derived from Russian *Spas*, *Spasitel'* (Спас, Спаситель) ['Saviour']) was a parallel term which was partly synonymous with *syndyzet* in Karelian laments. These terms are found in laments performed in different ritual and non-ritual contexts, where they exhibit interrelated fields of meaning. The prominence of *syndyzet* in the Karelian lament tradition has led this term and concept to be mentioned by many researchers. However, it was only exceptionally given special attention, and the focused discussions were often problematized by limited perspectives on the corpus of laments, challenges of penetrating the circumlocution of the lament register, and/or attempting to approach laments in isolation without consideration of other genres and ethnographic materials.

The objective of this paper is to offer an overview of the usage of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* within the Karelian lament tradition, and its relationship to the use of *syndyzet* in Karelian yoiks and to the use of *synty* in Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry. Variation in their usage for referring to the mythic world will be addressed in terms of the poetic "register", which will be introduced below. This overview will conclude with considerations of the fields of meaning of *syndyzet* and *synty* across different poetries and the question of whether this reflects the earlier significance of the term or its relationship to mythic images. A detailed discussion of the relative frequency of uses of these terms will be preceded by outlining the contexts of the tradition of Karelian laments and introductions to the theoretical frames of register and

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mythic knowledge. The history of research on *syndyzet* and *synty* will also be discussed.

Finno-Ugric Lament Traditions

Laments, especially funeral laments, were an important part of the life, worldview and the belief system of Finno-Ugric ethnic groups, and this provides an important context for consideration when approaching Karelian lament traditions. Laments form one of the oldest genres of oral ritual poetry. This genre may be generally defined as:

> melodic poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follows conventionalized rules of traditional verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions.

Laments – also called dirges, wailing, weeping or elegy – have been known all over the world and are still found in some cultures of the present day (see further Wilce 2009). Scholars agree that laments belong to the primordial varieties of folklore, with roots in the cult of the dead (Honko 1974: 9 and works there cited, Tolstoij 1958: 25). In most cultures, laments are performed by women, although men have also been found to perform them in some exceptional circumstances.[3] The most common ritual contexts for lamenting are funerals, weddings, and departure ceremonies. However, laments were also performed "occasionally", or outside of ritual contexts.

In addition to being a rich and strong women's tradition in Finnic cultures, lament traditions were vital among Mordvins, Komis and Hungarians, as well as being less known – or probably just poorly documented – among Mari, Udmurt and Mansi peoples. (Honko et al. 1993: 565–578.) The cult of the dead (and different elements or reflections of it) has been extremely strong and important among Finno-Ugric cultures, as can be seen in several contributions to this volume (e.g. Šutova). According to Anna-Leena Siikala (2002: 153), among Finno-Ugric peoples, the cult of the dead was bound to the kin institution, or the family as a whole, both living members and also the deceased in the otherworld. Thus, laments appear to be a central mode of expression associated with the cult of the dead, and therefore are of particular interest when considering mythic conceptions of the otherworld (Nenola 2002: 73).

With the exception of Sámi, the Volgic language groups are the closest Finno-Ugric cultures to Finnic groups both linguistically and folkloristically (cf. Frog, this volume), as well as geographically. Laments were observed in these groups among Mordvins and Maris. The Mordvin lament tradition was vital, rich and has been well documented. Compared to the Mordvin lament tradition, the Mari composed only short memorial laments. Mordvin laments were also performed by women in ritual and non-ritual contexts. Ritual contexts for laments were funerals, weddings, and departure ceremonies organized for men conscripted into military service. As a process, Mordvin burial rituals were close to Finnic traditions. Their laments

also contain the corresponding motifs and conceptions about death and the realm of the dead. (Imjarekov 1979: esp. 8–34.) The cult of ancestors was not only significant at funerals: for example, ancestors were given a central place in weddings when the bride performed farewell laments not only to the living members of her family, but also to the dead. (Honko et al. 1993: 570, Imjarekov 1979: 8.)

At the next stage of removal, among Permic language groups, the Komi exhibited a particularly developed and vital lament tradition, which – in addition to the common ritual contexts (funerals, weddings, departure ceremonies) – also had biographical laments and employed laments on occasions associated with work, as cradle-songs, and for banishing bedbugs and thistles (see e.g. Mikušev 1979; see also Mišarina, this volume). Among Udmurts, the lament tradition was also an improvised poetry, but it was not particularly developed in comparison with the Komi tradition (Honko et al. 1993: 569). An exceptional characteristic of the Udmurt lament tradition, which differentiates it from other Finno-Ugric lament traditions, is the fact that men could also perform laments, for example at a burial ritual for his deceased wife (Honko et al. 1993: 569).

Ugric is the branch of Finno-Ugric that is most removed from Finnic. Although there is little evidence of laments among Ob-Ugric peoples, as found among the Mansi (Honko et al. 1993: 569), they were quite vital among Hungarians. Hungarian laments were performed at the funeral ritual and also occasionally for different grievous and departure occasions. These laments were improvised in prose with melody. Laments were performed during the burial by a close female relative, and contained certain traditional motifs, such as the deceased's journey to the otherworld, where he or she meets the dead of his or her own kin. The lamenter also expressed her feelings of sadness and grief. (Tervonen 1994: 8–9, Honko et al. 1993: 568–569.)

Finnic lament traditions were found primarily in Orthodox areas and were exclusively performed by women. Both ritual and occasional laments were found among Karelians[4] and Vepsians; in Ingria among the Ižorians and Votes; and among the Seto of Southeast Estonia (Honko 1974, 2003, Nenola 1982, 1986, 2002, A. Stepanova 2003). All Finnic lament traditions utilized special kinds of improvisation. They were not learned by heart, but rather were created during the process of oral performance. The role of the lamenter as an intermediary with the otherworld and with dead members of the kin-group was particularly pronounced in Finnic traditions owing to the complexity of the special language which they used. These traditions exhibit correspondences on the level of motifs with Mordvin and Hungarian traditions related to images and conceptions of the otherworld, but laments have remained a liminal form of oral poetry in Finno-Ugric research and therefore these relationships have not been sufficiently studied.

Laments are such a universal genre that it is likely that there were traditions at earlier stages among Finno-Ugric peoples. From a comparative perspective, it is possible to observe that especially the oral poetry that belonged to mythology and ritual activity does not change very fast and rapidly. These oral poetries have a social function of preserving, transmitting

and organizing knowledge about the world – both that which is seen, and the unseen world, the world of the dead (cf. Siikala 2002: 39). As a consequence, traces of this knowledge can be accessed by using later oral-poetic materials through the comparative study of diverse sources and by employing the results of investigations of multiple disciplines. However, the history of cultural contacts of individual Finno-Ugric peoples with other cultures as well as with one another leaves the evolution and developments of these traditions unclear. Although different Finno-Ugric lament traditions exhibit corresponding features with one another, they also exhibit corresponding features with other cultures that appear related to their respective histories of cultural contact (E. Stepanova 2011). Christianity played a central role in all of the Finno-Ugric cultures and clearly influenced their lament traditions, which is, for example, quite evident in the term *spuassuzet* ['Saviour.DIM. PL']. However, the Christian conceptions were adopted and adapted into established systems of beliefs, rituals and poetic expression. For the present paper, it is important to frame Finnic traditions in a context of long-term continuities, even if their underlying history must await later investigation.

Sources

This study is based on 331 lament texts recorded from 69 lamenters and from three different areas of what is now the Republic of Karelia (Russian Federation): Viena Karelia, in the North; Olonec Karelia in the South; and Seesjärvi Karelia, the area between them. Of these, 233 texts are those in the only published collection of Karelian laments (Stepanova & Koski 1976). This collection does not include laments collected in Border Karelia (Raja-Karjala), a former Finnish territory, nor laments collected in Tver Karelia. The laments selected for this publication were collected by Soviet researchers in 1928–1971 – over a period of only 43 years. I also use the results of my analysis of 98 laments collected in 1970–2001 from Praskovja Saveljeva (1913–2002), a talented lamenter from Seesjärvi Karelia (E. Stepanova 2004). Saveljeva's laments provide a data-set for analyzing the use of the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* within an individual repertoire. The 69 lamenters in this study were born between the years 1861–1913, allowing them to internalize the tradition of lamenting long before the tradition had begun to vanish. These sources can therefore be considered sufficiently representative for the aims and objectives of this article.

As supplementary data for this article, I use the collection of 85 Viena Karelian yoiks published by Karelian folklorists (Stepanova, Lavonen & Rautio 1998). I also use the corpus of kalevalaic poetry *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (*SKVR*) ['Old Songs of the Finnish People'], consisting of more than 86,000 items, using its searchable electronic edition available online (http://dbgw.finlit.fi/skvr/skvr.phtml). These have both been searched for different variations of the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet*.

Mythological Thinking, Mythic Knowledge and Register

Mythological thinking is a mode of approaching and understanding the world that is not organized by logically connected concepts so much as working and acting on the dependence of images, motifs and conceptual schemas (see e.g. Lotman & Uspenskij 1976, Siikala 2002). "Mythology" mediated through traditions works as a modelling system: images, motifs and conceptual schemas become loaded with values and associations. These modeling systems are projected onto the seen and unseen world in order to understand and explain them. They provide the framework for strategies to interact between social groups, man and nature, and between worlds. They are correspondingly mapped over events and phenomena in the world, infusing them with meaningfulness as well as making them understandable to the people who experience them.

A common and prominent feature of systems of mythological thinking is structuring the world in terms of binary structural-semantic oppositions. Perhaps the most fundamental such opposition is the distinction of this world or the visible world of living communities and the "otherworld" or the unseen world of gods, supernatural being, dynamic forces and ancestors. The semantic opposition of this world and the otherworld does not mean that they are completely separated. In many if not all Finno-Ugric cultures, for example, the powers and actors of otherworld are always somewhere close if not immediately present and open to contact. The seen and unseen worlds exist in parallel and are recognizable and actualizable according to mythological thinking – according to inherited and internalized patterns of mythic knowledge mediated by tradition. (Limerov 1998: 3–4, Siikala 2002, Stark 2002, Tarkka 1990.)

The patterns of mythological knowledge are reflected and communicated through different genres. Lotte Tarkka, focusing on kalevalaic epic poetry, points out that:

> texts and genres of folk poetry are meaningful only in relation to one another and through one another. The same system of images, the same texts move within the systemic whole of tradition and create a symbolic network or intertextual space, which can be called the world of epic. (Tarkka 1990: 238.)

The construction of meaningfulness through this intertextual space simultaneously communicates and constructs mythic knowledge and the modeling system for mythological thinking. As Anna-Leena Siikala observes:

> mythical images are not just any images or observations; they acquire meaning by referring to the phenomena of the mythical world. This referential relationship based on the belief tradition is the key to understanding mythical discourse. (Siikala 2002: 49.)

Each genre is also subject to its own conventions, priorities and uses. These play different roles in the construction of mythic knowledge, and the

mythic images, motifs and conceptions are often shared across genres, but also may vary significantly between genres. They may also vary by region, community, and even from one individual to the next. The otherworld of Karelian laments is constructed of multiple, diverse elements in different regions. Even within the genre, concepts and images of the otherworld are stratified, as can be seen in parallel uses of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet*. Sometimes these stratified elements may also be inwardly contradictory. (Tarkka 2005: 308.)

Karelian laments do not usually offer a clear, concrete or detailed picture of the world of the dead (Konkka 1985: 62; cf. Mansikka 1924). Most often, lamenters simply state that the deceased is departing to the otherworld where dead members of the family (e.g. *valkiet omakuntaiset* ['white.PL own-community.DIM.PL'] or *valkiet syntyiset* ['white.PL *syndyzet*']) come to meet the deceased with candles. Lamenters may also ask the *syndyzet* to prepare a *vaškivajosuisie* ['copper stairs.DIM.PL'], by which the deceased can go to *syndyzet* ['realm of the dead'].[5] Whereas in kalevalaic epic and incantations, the otherworld is represented on the horizontal plane and separated by a water barrier (Siikala 2002: 139–145, 150–152, 160–162, 189–191), interestingly, the water barrier is not part of the mythic world represented and communicated through laments, in which the deceased simply walks to the realm of the dead. However, laments also present a mythic gate for entering the realm of the dead and a dog which guards it. Lamenters would ask the *syndyzet* to come and meet the deceased with candles at those gates so that the dog will not bark. This mythic otherworld dog emerges as powerful image in kalevalaic incantations and belongs to a widely international tradition of the dog guarding the world of the dead (Siikala 2002: 107–108, 134–138). The dog and gates also appear, for example, as a mythic obstacle to be overcome by the hero Lemminkäinen on his journey to the otherworld (Frog 2010: 377–394). However, the conditions of the otherworld as represented in kalevalaic and in lament poetries also stand in sharp contrast: in kalevalaic poetry, the otherworld is cold and dark (see Siikala 2002: 160–162, Tarkka 2005: 308–309), whereas in laments it is a safe, beautiful and bright place. As opposed to the horizontal movement and water barrier of kalevalaic poetry, the mention of stairways in laments indicates vertical movement. There is no indication of whether that vertical movement is up or down in laments, but baking a pancake for the Yuletide spirit *syndy* (addressed below) and asking for a stairway to heaven (Konkka 2007: 340) is associated with vertical movement to the upper world. These differences may reflect the stratified nature of mythological thinking across genres (cf. Frog, this volume).

The stratified nature of mythological thinking is most readily seen in the synthesis of Christian concepts, mythic figures and beliefs into a pre-existing vernacular tradition. For example, people believed in the Christian God, prayed to God and saints in front of icons and celebrated Christian holidays, but at the same time, they actively believed in spirits of nature or generally in divine powers, and also maintained the cult of the dead as a vital part of social life. All of these elements were intertwined and consequently Christian saints, for example, became congruent with the dead members of

one's own family (Järvinen 2004: 223). Laments are no exception: Christian and vernacular mythic images were assimilated in different combinations in each region of the Karelian lament tradition.

All of these conceptions are communicated through the language of different folklore genres, and can therefore be approached according to the concept of "register".[6] Register is originally a linguistic term to refer to language as determined by communicative context, participant interlocutors and their relationships. Here, register will be used in a broad sense which is not constrained to verbal elements of communication (e.g. lexicon, syntax, stylistic features, formulaicity, etc.). As in the works of John Miles Foley (1995) and Asif Agha (2004), register will be considered inclusive of all features which have a capacity to signify (e.g. voice, gesture, posture, props such as objects or costuming, also visual motifs represented through poetry, etc.). The conventionalized nature of the registers of folk poetry maintained elements of diverse cultural and historical origins as current and meaningful in the life of the tradition. These provided a central medium for communicating mythic knowledge, and reciprocally a register-based approach provides valuable insights into the mythic knowledge communicated.

The register of Karelian laments is characterized by a system of formulaic expressions and associated system of poetic circumlocutions, special grammatical forms, stylistic features, melody, and paralinguistic features. Central among these are formulaic expressions and a special lexicon which is not easily comprehensible to the uninitiated listener. This lexicon is filled with circumlocutions because relatives, intimate people, some objects as well as phenomena are never named directly. (A. Stepanova 1985, 2003, 2004.) This aspect of the language is rooted in naming taboos, for example the avoidance of the name of the deceased. One explanation given by researchers for this special lexicon is that in an earlier period, people believed in the magic power of the name, and therefore in order to avoid harming relatives, either living or deceased, they did not mention names directly. (Honko 1963: 128, Konkka 1975: 178.) These taboos were later forgotten as the powerful magical associations of names waned in significance, yet the poetic language of laments retained its value, its "word power" (Foley 1995), and in Karelia this remained bound to beliefs that the dead ancestors could not understand normal spoken language, and could only understand the special language of laments (A. Stepanova 2003: 186).

The register of laments is marked by an abundant use of diminutive, possessive and plural forms, as, for example, in the terms *syndyzet* [*syndy*.DIM.PL] and *spuassuzet* [*spuassu*.DIM.PL] introduced above. These features have recently been addressed by Jim Wilce (forthcoming) from a linguistic-anthropological perspective. Wilce situates the use of diminutive plural forms and avoidance functions of the system of circumlocutions in typological relation to similar phenomena which mark registers in diverse cultures from around the world. He shows that uses of diminutive and plural forms are common strategies to mark a speaker's relation to an honoured authority, as are uses of avoidance terms and the lamenter representing her ego in the third person. He argues convincingly that the register of laments can itself be described as an

honorific register, and also as a liturgical register. Both of these descriptors characterize the use of this register for addressing the otherworld, and also the lamenters' relationship to the addressees in the otherworld. The same register was also used to address members of this world, where it could also function as an honorific register directed to the addressee. As conventionalized features of the lament register, this in fact emerges in all contexts of lamenting. Wilce's argument finds support in the uses of positive epithets within the lament register. The copious use of epithets is characteristic of this register, and all people, objects and phenomena are qualified with positive epithets (e.g. "white", "beautiful", "flourishing"), with the exception of the lamenter's representation of her own ego, which is qualified with negative epithets (e.g. "miserable", "pitiful", "wilting body", "tired old woman"), and in wedding laments, the groom and the groom's retinue are also often referred to in a negative way. This use of epithets mirrors other honorific aspects of the register in the relationship which it constructs between the lamenter and the addressee.

Rather than strictly metered poetry, laments were performed within rhythmic-melodic templates of variable length and associated with a single expressive sequence called a poetic "string" (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 197). Each string is conditioned by prominent stylistic features of alliteration and parallelism. Each string would normally represent a complete unit of content, unified by a consistent pattern of alliteration. Parallelism could be realized both within a string, and parallelism was prominent between strings: the unit of content in a string could be repeated from two to seven times, each with additive information or progression of plot and marked by different patterns of alliteration. Within this strategy, the system of circumlocutions also functioned as a lexicon of synonyms able to accommodate constraints of alliteration in the demands of repetition (cf. Roper 2011).

The features listed above, for example, are shared across all local traditions of Karelian laments and are more generally common across all Finnic lament traditions. These features can therefore be described as the *general register* of Finnic laments, which has local variant forms or *dialects* of the general register. Karelian lament traditions represent one of the dialects within the Finnic lament tradition, and there are also dialects and sub-dialects within the Karelian lament tradition itself. This distinction is useful because dialects of the lament register do not necessarily correspond to dialects of the Karelian language (A. Stepanova 1985: 16). Within the general register of laments, the lexicon can be divided into an *essential lexicon* and a *context-dependent lexicon*.

The *essential lexicon* is constituted of those elements which are employed across all types of laments and lament contexts, such as circumlocutions for the ego of the lamenter, terms for familial relations, this world, the otherworld and divine beings. Although it has been conventional to divide laments into sub-genres according to context of performance (funeral laments, wedding laments, occasional laments, etc.), this does not define the life of laments, but rather highlights certain functions or features. These are more accurately described through a register-based approach.

The *context-dependent lexicon* is constituted of elements which are

associated with certain themes, motifs or subjects which may appear in different contexts but are not fundamental to all laments. Certain contexts require a concentration of elements associated with the context-dependent lexicon. For example, the image of the copper stairway, the barking dog, gates and dead ancestors coming with candles are required features of funeral laments and therefore must employ the appropriate elements of the context-dependent lexicon, elements which are rarely used in any other context. However, other elements of the context-dependent lexicon may reflect, for example, aspects of secular life, such as food, drink, body-parts, feelings, time, modes of transportation, buildings, and so forth.

The essential lexicon describes the world and its actors while the context-dependent lexicon contains everything of which the world and its actors are constituted. Within the general register of Finnic laments, the Karelian tradition has a clearly developed and definable lexicon, as is evident from *Tolkovyj slovar' jazyka karel'skix pričitanij* ['A Dictionary of Karelian Lament Language'] (A. Stepanova 2004). The Karelian lament lexicon also exhibits clear regional variation, as will become apparent below, as well as sub-dialects and even variation on the level of specific individuals. Nonetheless, terms such as *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* are features of the essential register throughout these regions. These terms reflect mythic conceptions and develop conventional (although not necessarily static) associations with the units of content which they represent. On local levels, the lexicon of laments becomes a verbal network and system bound up with conceptions and models of the otherworld, its inhabitants, and its relations with this world. Individuals internalize mythic knowledge through exposure to and participation in this verbal network of the lexicon and the broader register of laments with all that these represent and communicate, as well as through their engagement with other genres of folklore in their cultural activity.

Fields of Meaning of syndyzet and spuassuzet in Laments

In laments, the term *syndyzet* has been generally associated with the field of meaning "dead ancestors", and the identification of the term as a diminutive plural derivative of the word *synty* (i.e. *syndyzet* = *synty*.DIM.PL) ['origin, beginning, birth, genesis'] (e.g. Konkka 1985: 37–40) is not seriously contested. When addressing *syndyzet* in his *Suomalainen mytologia* ['Finnish Mythology'], Martti Haavio (1967: 284–286) states that *syndyzet* is generally a euphemism in laments for the dead members of the family, but he made the significant observation that there are local differences in the term's meanings. The importance of Haavio's observation regarding the multidimensity of meanings of *syndyzet* was not itself compromised by Haavio's somewhat intuitive idealization of variation in the semantic field of *syndyzet*, which does not appear well-grounded on a detailed survey and analysis of extensive sources.[7] Althoguh Unelma Konkka (1985: 37–40) touched only briefly on the subject of *syndyzet* in her study *Ikuinen ikävä* ['Eternal Grief'] on Karelian ritual laments, she very importantly – if in a rather oversimplified way – recognized *spuassuzet* ['Saviour.DIM.PL'] as an

equivalent to *syndyzet*, which in the context of laments also meant "dead ancestors" – "the inhabitants of the otherworld" (Konkka 1985: 38). The following analysis develops these central observations of Haavio and Konkka regarding patterns of variation and synonymy into a study of terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* according to fields of meaning in relation to lament context by region of the Karelian lament tradition. The 233 lament texts collected from 69 lamenters are distributed across these regions as follows (the 98 laments collected from the lamenter Praskovja Saveljeva will be addressed separately below): Viena, 73 lament texts; Seesjärvi or Middle Karelia, 60 lament texts; Olonec, 100 lament texts (see tables in Appendix 1). References to the otherworld are of course more abundant in funeral laments owing to the lamenter's role in the ritual: she is responsible for "guiding" the deceased safely to the otherworld, integrating him or her into the community of dead ancestors. However, both the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* occur in all other ritual lament contexts as well as non-ritual lamentations.

In Viena Karelian laments, the term *syndyzet* appears in three grammatical forms: *a*) in the diminutive plural form *syntyiset* as required by the lament register; and *b*) without a diminutive suffix but in plural *synnyt* or *c*) in singular *synty*, which is familiar from the kalevalaic poetry addressed below. Each form has its own distinct field of meaning: *a*) in a majority of cases, *syntyiset* refers to the otherworld as a place of the dead (69 cases); and *b*) *synnyt* never refers to anything other than divine powers (24 cases). In Viena, divine powers could also be indicated using the term *spuassuzet* (28 cases). Once again, the otherworld as an abode of the dead could be expressed by using the parallel term *Tuonela* or *Tuonala* (28 cases), which is well established in kalevalaic poetry (Siikala 2002: 144–153, 301–307). In contrast to *syndyzet*, *Tuonela* never appears in either diminutive or plural forms. When the terms *Tuonela*/*Tuonala* and *syntyiset* are used together in one lament, the distinction of their meanings is clear: *Tuonela* means the otherworld as the location of the dead and *syndyzet* refers to dead members of the family, ancestors, as in the following example:

> Aijan jälkimmäiset kertaset ašeteltih aikojaiseni armahat šanaset. Ka elkyä pankua armaš narotakunta aijan äijie ašeukkisijasie, jotta enkö voi hoti ankeh vartuon aššukšennella aijan šilmittelömäh aikojaistani Tuonalan armahista šyntyisistä.[8]
>
> Oh, for the last time.DIM.PL, my creator.DIM's ['mother'] dear words.DIM are put away. Oh, dear people-community, do not put too much of a new place ['grave'] on [the one in the grave] so that the pitiful body ['I'] can step to see my creator.DIM ['mother'] from among *Tuonela*'s ['otherworld'] *syndyzet* ['dead ancestors'].

The terms *syndyzet*, *Tuonela* and *synty* can all be used in one lament, and their fields of meaning can be overlapping. The following example from Viena Karelia, in which the lamenter laments in the name of the deceased son to his mother, reveals how *syndyzet* could occur referring variously to the otherworld as a place of the dead and also to divine powers:

> Passipo, kaunehilla ilmoilla šiätäjä kantajaisen, näiltä kajon armahilta kannikkaverosilta, kun kaunistelit kajon armahat. Kajon ylähäini kaunis synty kajon ašetelkah hänellä Tuonelan kaunehuisih.
>
> Passipo še, mairehilla ilmoilla šiätäjä mainojaisen, mairehilta mainivoverosilta. Manun ašetelkah ne manun ylähäiset mairehet syntyset Tuonelan mairehuisih maireiksi mainivoveroloiksi.
>
> Passipo še, armahilla ilmoilla šiätelijä aikojaisen, aijan ašettelomua aijan armahien atrivoverosien. Anna ne aijan ylähäiset armahat syntyset ašetellah tuolla aikomaisellaš armahih šyntysih armahiksi atrivoveroloin [...].[9]
>
> Thanks to on the beautiful.PL world.PL establisher carrier.DIM ['mother'] for the dear.PL feast.DIM.PL that you made beautiful. Let high.DIM beautiful *synty* ['divine power, god'] set [the feast] for him [the deceased son] into *Tuonela*'s ['otherworld'] beautifulness.DIM.PL.
>
> Thanks to on the wonderful.PL world.PL establisher creator.DIM ['mother'] for the wonderful.PL feast.DIM.PL. Let high.PL wonderful.PL *syntyset* ['divine power(s), god(s)'] set it [the feast] into Tuonela's ['otherworld'] wonderfulness.DIM.PL to make it a wonderful.PL feast.DIM.PL.
>
> Thanks to on the dear.PL world.PL establisher maker.DIM ['mother'] for setting a dear.PL feast.DIM.PL. Let the high.DIM.PL dear.PL *syntyset* ['divine power(s), god(s)'] set it [the feast] there for your made one.DIM into the dear.PL syntyset ['otherworld'] to make it a dear.PL feast.DIM.PL. […].

In Viena Karelian laments, the use of terms related to concepts of the otherworld seems to be divided into three semantic fields relating to the system of mythological knowledge, two of which have overlapping terms: *synty–spuassuzet* can refer to "divine powers"; *Tuonela–syntyzet* can refer to the "otherworld"; and *syntyzet* can also refer to the inhabitants of the otherworld. However, the term *syntyzet* could refer to divine powers, the otherworld as a location and the inhabitants of that otherworld location, covering all three fields of meaning. (The distribution of these terms according to field of meaning and context of lament are detailed in Table 1 in Appendix 1).

In Seesjärvi laments, the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* appear less frequently than in the laments of other regions (see Table 2). However, *spuassuzet* dominates both the field of meaning signifying divine powers (42 cases) and also for signifying the otherworld as a location of the dead (42 cases). The term *syndyzet* is only used to refer to the otherworld as a location (35 cases), with only one example of its use to refer to divine powers. In most Seesjärvi laments, *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* are used as complete synonyms for the abode of the dead (77 cases), as can be observed in the following example:

[…] myö jo jälgimäžen kerdažen
armašta mamaista armahih syndyzih aššuttelemma,
i viezloveä mamaista jo viekkahih spoaššuzih vierettimä.[10]

[…] we, already for the last.DIM time.DIM,
are settling [the] dear mother.DIM in the dear.PL *syndyzet* [‘otherworld’],
and are conveying [the] graceful mother.DIM already to the nice.PL *spuassuzet* [‘otherworld’].

However, the clear social patterns of usage of a region do not mean that all lamenters used these terms in precisely that way. According to the analysis of nearly 100 laments performed by a single lamenter, Praskovja Saveljeva from the Seesjärvi region, it becomes apparent that her usage of these elements of the essential lexicon differs from the conventional patterns of the region where she was born and lived. Saveljeva was extremely active, well-known and respected as a lamenter in her local area, as well as being a sought-after healer and specialist in other genres of folklore. In all of her laments, Saveljeva clearly differentiates between *syndyzet* [‘the otherworld and its inhabitants’] and *spuassuzet* [‘divine powers’] as in the following example:

Ottele, oi mieli kandajazeni,
valgeissa synd’yzissä valgie kandajazeni,
polvi spuassuzilda polvien piälizet polvipoklonat,
eigo siuda miun kera n’ytt’en polvi spuassuzet pozvolittais.[11]

Make, oh my nice carrier.DIM [‘mother’],
in the white.PL *syndyzet* [‘otherworld’], my white carrier.DIM [‘mother’],
to the knee *spuassuzet* [‘divine powers’], on your knee.PL kneeling bow.PL,
[to ask] could not the knee *spuassuzet* [‘divine powers’] give permission for us [to meet].

Not only did Saveljeva’s usage differ from the regional tradition to which she belonged, but the fact that she never mixed these terms under any documented circumstances shows the structured clarity of her internalization of the lexicon in relation to her mythic knowledge.

In Olonec laments, the term *syndyzet* is used much more than in laments from the other regions. It dominates both in terms of frequency of use and is the dominant term across all three primary semantic fields: divine powers (65 cases), the otherworld as a location of the dead (46 cases), and the inhabitants of the otherworld (18 cases). Among these fields, referring to the divine powers is predominant. The term *spuassuzet* (33 cases) is used alongside *syndyzet* in these laments, although only in the sense of “divine powers”. Some lamenters from Olonec distinguished the fields of meaning of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* in same the lament, as Praskovja Saveljeva above. However, it appears more common that the term *syndyzet* can refer variously to divine powers, the otherworld and also its inhabitants within the same lament, as in the following characteristic example performed by Anna Kibroeva:

Blahoslovikkua, kallehedi syndyizet kadalaizel naizel
iččeni da ihostettuu kuonuttelemah.
Blahoslovikkua, parahadi syndyizet,
parastu da iččeni da ihostu pagizuttamah.
Nygöi näi gu olet sinä
vakki da viero viilemättömih sobazih šuoriteldu.
Onnuakko oled valgehih syndyzih varusteltu?
Vastajeldihko valgijat syndyizet
valgehien vahoituohustuluzien kera?[12]

Dear.PL *syndyzet* ['divine powers'], bless the miserable woman ['me']
to wake up the one who is like me ['deceased female person'].
Best.PL *syndyzet* ['divine powers'], bless [me]
to start talking to the best one whose face is like mine ['deceased female person'].
Now you see, as you are
dressed in a special.PL and uncut.PL dress.DIM.PL.
Are you already equipped for the white.PL *syndyzet* ['otherworld']?
Did the white.PL *syndyzet* ['inhabitants of the otherworld'] come to meet [you]
with white-wax-candles.DIM?

It was observed above that *Tuonela* is used to refer to the otherworld location in laments of Viena Karelia. The term *Tuone-la* is a formation from a base-word *Tuoni* (*Tuone-*) with a derivational suffix *-la*. In modern Finnic languages, this suffix primarily indicates a location associated with the stem, although its history is long and complex and it may have originally been a diminutive affix (Hakulinen 1961: 119–120; cf. Frog, this volume). In Seesjärvi, the form *Tuoni* appears in genitive constructions indicative of an otherworld location, such as "yksill'ä da kajoilla tuomen dorogazilla"[13] ['on the only.PL and narrow.PL road.DIM.PL of *Tuoni*']. However, use of this term is extremely rare. The base-word *Tuoni* should not be assumed to simply be a noun meaning "death". Otherwise in Karelian laments, common words for the death are never used; in their place, paraphrases such as *udalat syndyzet/spuassuzet lujah uinotettu* ['brave *syndyzet*/*spuassuzet* have put into a heavy sleep'], in which *syndyzet*/*spuassuzet* represent the powers causing death, although in positive rather than negative terms. In Olonec Karelia, the term *Tuoni* also appears in genitive constructions, as in Seesjärvi laments. It is equally rare (3 cases), and there are no examples of *Tuonela*. Two of these examples appear in the phrase, *Älä jo Tuonen piäl tuskevu* ['Do not get angry with the *Tuoni*']. Here, *Tuoni* seems to be a single personified being of the otherworld with a farm and household as in kalevalaic poetry (Siikala 2002: 145). The *Tuoni* could be interpreted as a being which causes death comparable to *syntyzet*/*spuassuzet* above. This pattern of use may also underlie the usage of *Tuoni* in Seesjärvi laments. The term *Tuoni* as a mythic being connected to the otherworld and realm of the dead may have archaic roots: the corresponding being *Toon* is known from Seto laments and could therefore reflect a broader Finnic heritage (Hurt 1904, item 253, Arukask 1999: 90; cf. E. Stepanova 2011).

Whereas *Tuoni* (as well as *Toon*) may reflect an archaic element of

mythic knowledge which was maintained as meaningful in the context-dependent lexicon of laments, it persisted in spite of the greater influence of Christianity on concepts of the abode of the dead in the Olonec region. The influence of the Orthodox Church was stronger and more prominent in southern regions of Karelia owing to their proximity to urban and trade centers, denser populations and consequently more churches, priests and village-based communities. Nonetheless, the prominence of Christian influences on laments did not result in the displacement of the vernacular models and lexicon but were rather synthesized into vernacular models of mythic knowledge, as is evident in the predominance of *syndyzet* across semantic fields in this region.

The Olonec lamenter, Anna Kibroeva, continued her lament quoted above by asking the deceased woman a long series of questions about the otherworld and what happened there when she arrived. Addressing (rhetorical) questions to the deceased is a widespread strategy in laments when communicating with the deceased and the otherworld. Kibroeva opens hers with the common motif of inquiring whether the *valgijat syndyizet* ['white.PL *syndyzet*'] came to meet the deceased woman with candles, and whether *Tuoni*'s dogs barked. However, the subsequent questions are exceptional in their number, in their details and most strikingly in the indications of doubt that mark them. The indications of doubt are notably only connected with images and motifs that are not conventional to the mythic world of laments. With circumlocutions and repetitions, this series of questions becomes far too long to present here, but the questions to the deceased can be summarized as containing the following:

> Did the dead come to meet you with candles?
> Did the dog of *Tuoni* bark?
> Were you (the deceased) taken onto the right roads?
> Supposedly, there is a fiery river, so were you taken across the fiery river in a boat?
> Supposedly, after the river, there are gates of paradise, so were there these gates with nine hinges after the river, and were they opened?
> Supposedly, after the gates, there are endless green lawns, so were there endless green lawns?
> Were there wells filled with nectar waters on the lawns; were there golden cups at the wells and did you get to drink the nectar waters?
> Supposedly, there are tables with 66 dishes and 44 appetizers – if you get to these tables, look around, there are all of my family gathered together.
> Tell my family about my life.

The lamenter expresses no doubts regarding the dead meeting the deceased with candles, the journey to the otherworld being on a road, *Tuoni*'s dog being along that road, or that the dead ancestor are gathered and present in the otherworld and that the deceased can carry greetings and news to other deceased members of the family from the world of the living via the lamenter. However, a genuine uncertainty appears to be reflected in the collage of images which are not conventional for laments but which can

be found in Christian religious poetry (the gates of paradise and green lawns with wells of nectar), fairy tales (the description of the feast) and kalevalaic poetry (the fiery river which requires passage on a mythic boat). It is possible that the lamenter Anna Kibroeva was hoping or expecting answers to these questions to be provided by the deceased in her dreams: dreams were commonly believed to provide the channel for reciprocal communication with the dead (see e.g. Järvinen 2004: 189–205).

Influence from Christianity can also be seen in extension of the field of meaning of the term *syndyzet* to participate in circumlocutions for icons: the pre-Christian meaning was mapped onto a Christian object. Earlier studies (e.g. Konkka 1985: 38) treated the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* in laments as capable of meaning "icons". This view is centrally rooted in the description of a late-19th century fieldwork encounter of Nikolaj Leskov who transcribed some laments when visiting a Karelian village. During the collection session, Leskov asked the old woman he was interviewing who the *syndyzet* appearing in the lament were. After thinking for a while, the woman replied that the *syndyzet* are icons. (Leskov 1894: 222–223.) In my opinion, it seems highly improbable that the old woman paused to think because she did not know what she was referring to in her own lament. This pause most probably reflects the woman's need to consider how to adapt the concept of *syndyzet* of her belief system to something that a sophisticated teacher from the seminary could easily understand. Moreover, the old woman's use of the term "icons" may have been a metonymic synonym for "gods" (i.e. the gods that icons represent or manifest). This isolated interview alone therefore cannot be taken as unequivocal evidence that *syndyzet* was capable of meaning "icons" (see also the example of *synty* in Viena yoiks below). This semantic field is not self-evident in the data reviewed here. In the corpus of lament texts analyzed for this study, the term *syndyzet* appears only 4 times to refer to icons, and this occurs exclusively in Viena Karelian laments, much as *spuassuzet* independently began being used rarely to indicate "icons" in the Olonec region (see Table 3 in Appendix 1). In all other cases, *syndyzet* or more precisely *synty*.PL. participates in a circumlocution for "icon" although carrying meaning of divine powers, as for example:

> Olkuol'koa pois, oimun omattomat vierahat ottamat, esistä oččiseinillä olijien orheijen syntyjen [....][14]
>
> Move off, non-bereaved strangers ['groom's retinue'], from the brave *synty*-beings standing on the forehead ['frontal'] walls ['icons'] [....]

The term *synty* (*syndyzet* in other cases) in the circumlocution "brave *synty*-beings standing on the forehead walls" refers to "icons". Within that circumlocution, the term *synty* refers, however, to the divine powers which icons represent. In some Viena laments, a circumlocution for icons as a concrete object is also found, for example, *oččašeinillä olijie vaškioprasaisie*[15] ['on the front-wall.PL present copper-icon.DIM.PL']. In Viena Karelian laments, *synty* appears to have developed a capacity to signify "icons"

through its metonymic use of referring to the divine powers represented by those icons (cf. also Šutova, this volume, for a similar development in Udmurt ritual vocabulary).

Syndyzet appears as a core element of the essential lexicon of the Karelian lament register. This term was clearly connected to the maintenance and transmission of mythic knowledge which developed as a historical process. The different fields of meaning which are more or less central in different regions are associated with regional developments of the essential lexicon and the belief system(s) which it reflects and supports. However, the term *syndyzet* is centrally connected to the otherworld and dead ancestors across all of these regional and local traditions, as well as in the idiolects of individual lamenters. In contrast, the term *spuassuzet* is primarily used to signify divine powers, although it too developed within regional lexicons to become more or less identified with the semantic fields of *syndyzet*, being assimilated as a representative of that aspect of mythic knowledge. This is exemplified by the development in the Seesjärvi region, where one term – *spuassuzet* – dominates in fields of meaning signifying both divine powers and the otherworld as a place of the dead, as opposed to Viena and Olonec where *spuassuzet* is primarily used to refer to divine powers. This is a striking example of the degree to which new concepts related to mythic knowledge could be assimilated into the vernacular modes of mythological thinking.

The analysis presented here shows that the generalizations made by earlier researchers about an unambiguous meaning of *syndyzet* in laments are problematic. This remains true whether researchers assumed an overall definition or addressed the term according to region and ritual context, particularly because they failed to consider the possibility that *syndyzet* could have multiple and intersecting semantic fields which were not consistent from one region to the next. The present investigation differs from these earlier investigations on uses of *syndyzet* in laments in several significant respects. First, it takes a register-based approach to the language of the poetic system as an approach to accounting (at least in part) for mythic knowledge. As a consequence, it engages social contexts of use and transmission. The register-based approach restructures perspectives on different types of laments (e.g. weddings, funerals, non-ritual laments) in terms of differences in applications rather than differences in structure and semantics of different genres. In other words, it is not that the semantics of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* change in these different types of laments because of inherent differences between them, but rather that their applications and the functions of laments foreground certain of the overlapping semantic fields both at the level of the individual lamenter and as a broader social phenomenon. In addition, this register-based approach exchanges ideal and universal definitions for the consideration of regional conventions and individual conceptions of differences between the language, mythic knowledge and the people who understood it on the basis of their own, intimate experience.

According to this study, in the lament poetry of Viena Karelia, *syndyzet* and *Tuonela* indicate the abode of the dead while *synty/synnyt* and *spuassuzet* were used to indicate divine powers, and *synty* was also extending its

semantic field to refer to icons as well. In laments of Seesjärvi Karelia, *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* were consistently used as synonyms for the abode of the dead, whereas *spuassuzet* also appears in the meaning of divine powers, thus dominating the field of naming the mythic unseen world and its actors. In the Olonec region, lamenters prefered the term *syndyzet* in all of its possible fields of meaning: *syndyzet* were the abode of the dead, its inhabitants, and also divine powers; *spuassuzet* were in contrast used rarely with the meaning of divine powers as well as developing the capacity to refer to icons. The regions addressed in this study can be complemented by the observations of Martti Haavio, who claims that in wedding laments of the Border Karelia region, *syndyzet* meant "primarily saints alias 'gods', thus supernatural beings" (Haavio 1967: 285), whereas in funeral laments it refered "unambiguously to the dead, to inhabitants of the otherworld" (Haavio 1967: 285). He also mentions that "in Tver Karelia, *syndyzet* are known only as the dead members of the family". However, Haavio's observations should be regarded with caution and require reassessment. For example, he also states that in Viena, *syndyzet* refers "regularly to the otherworld, but not to personified beings alias the dead members of the family or saints" (Haavio 1967: 286), which according to the present study is accurate with regard to the otherworld and its inhabitants, but not with regard to use of *syndyzet* to refer to divine powers (see Table 1 in Appendix 1).

Now that these perspectives have been developed from within the corpus of the lament tradition itself, examination can be further advanced to situate this language and mythic knowledge in broader folkloric and ethnographic contexts, considering the relationship of *syndyzet* to broader ritual and belief traditions as well as language and its uses in other poetic systems with diverse applications.

Ethnographic Perspectives on syndyzet and syndy

Ethnographic material on *syndy* were from the outset associated with the term *syndyzet* in laments. However, these discussions were problematized by the fact that researchers of laments tended not to take the ethnographic material into consideration whereas researchers investigating ethnographic data on *syndy* had difficulty accessing the language, poetics and possibly also the corpus of laments.

Among Karelians and Vepsians, Yuletide was also called *syndymua* ['the time of *syndy*'] (Kalima 1928: 257–270, A. Konkka 2007; cf. Lintrop, this volume) – the period of the Christmas holidays – as well as *synty* ['Savior']. At the same time, *syndy* also was understood as some sort of supernatural being or spirit. (Kalima 1928: 257–270.) In his study of Karelian Yuletide traditions, Nikolaj Leskov (1894: 222–223) mentioned *syndy* as some kind of spirit that appeared at that time, but he also mentions that *syndy* could be "gods, presumably secondary gods after *Jumala*, but very popular gods among Karelians, respected by everyone and having great significance in family life" (Leskov 1894: 223). The general significance and prominence mentioned by Leskov appears to be confirmed by the fact that the Russian

population of Olonec Karelia borrowed the term *syndy* into the Russian language and assimilated it into their belief system as *tsjunda* ['wicked house spirit'] (Kulikovski 1898: *s.v.* 'цюнда'). V. J. Mansikka (1924: 178) suggested that cultural influences may initially have been in the opposite direction: he points out that *syndyzet* could be a direct translation loan from Russian, in which the words *rod* (род) ['kin'] and *roditeli* (родители) ['parents; those who give birth'] could also mean "dead ancestors". However, Martti Haavio (1967: 286) observes that it is also possible to consider *syndyzet* as a vernacular term of ancient Finnish tradition (cf. Konkka 1985: 37–40). The relationship between *rod* and *syndy* and significance of Finnic–Slavic contacts for these traditions warrants detailed investigation, but is unfortunately too involved to address here. These debates have nevertheless highlighted that it is essential to take the ethnographic data concerning *syndyzet* into consideration.

In an article on the calendar mythology and rituals of the Karelians from the Sjamozero region (in the south part of the Republic of Karelia), Aleksi Konkka carefully surveys the various ethnographic, linguistic and folklore materials, which show how the term *synty/syndy* was used in the period between Christmas and the Epiphany. He affirms the importance of *synty* proposed by Leskov more than a century earlier and significantly advances and elaborates perspectives on the ethnographic data. According to Konkka (2007: 339–378), these traditions more specifically concerned so-called *Suuri syndy* ['Great *Syndy*']. Great *Synty* was widely known among Karelians as the Yuletide's spirit, and appeared in magic customs, calendar rituals, prayers, and prophecies. However, there also remained some more general conceptions of *syndy* as a divine being, a creator-god, from whom, for example, people asked prophecy (referred to with the expression, "to listen to *syndy*"). It was also necessary to bake a pancake for this *synty*, and this pancake could function as a stairway to the heaven as mentioned above.[16] (Konkka 2007: 339–378.) Aleksi Konkka's contribution to this discourse is of exceptional value for drawing together all available ethnographic material on the subject of *syndy*. His work remains focused on calendrical rituals, however, and his discussion of its relationship to the *syndyzet* of laments remains problematic owing to its dependence on earlier research. Konkka's extensive work nevertheless provides a broad frame for the reconsideration of the relationship between *syndy* and Great *Syndy* to the *syndyzet* of laments.

Synty and syndyzet in Karelian Yoiks

Although yoiks are normally associated with the Sámi, yoiks were also a traditional part of Viena Karelian culture. The register and compositional strategies of yoiks are remarkably close to the Viena Karelian lament register, including its lexicon and stylistic features. Karelian yoiks are improvised songs with humorous or satirical content. They were performed by both men and women, although in the 20th century, the tradition was preserved exclusively among women. They were often about young men (grooms) and

their lives – bachelorhood, war, drinking, smoking – whereas women were represented as a part of a man's life, as a man's mother or bride. (Lavonen, Stepanova & Rautio 1993, Kelkettelyeänijä 2000.) The term *synty* or *syndy* (plural *synnyt*) as well as *syndyzet* appear in wedding and occasional yoiks as well as yoiks for recruits departing for military service.

The usage of *synty* and *syndyzet* in Viena Karelian yoiks is the same as in Viena Karelian laments, but these terms are used less frequently. Epithets accompanying *synty* and *syndyzet* are the same in laments and yoiks, always having a positive value, for example, *kallis* ['precious'], *mairea* ['beautiful'], *viekas* ['brave'], *valkea* ['white'], *armas* ['lovely'], and so forth. In wedding and recruit yoiks, *synty* has the same fields of meaning as in wedding laments of the Viena Karelia region. First, it appears as part of circumlocutions for "icons", indicating the divine powers associated with icons. Second, it refers to the divine powers themselves when addressing natural phenomena. The following example presents a formulaic sequence used repeatedly in this particular recruit yoik. It shows how *synty* could be used in both of these meanings:

> Ka šuorijaisen ole esissä šukien šynnyn,
> eikö šukie šynty šuojualis šulavammin ošin.[17]
>
> And provider.DIM ['mother of the recruit'] stand before the nice *synty* ['icon'], could the nice *synty* ['divine power'] not provide [the recruit] with better luck.

In most cases, *synty* is used in genitive constructions attributing agency or ownership to divine powers, for example, "*kallehen synnyn kallehina pruasnikkoina*"[18] ['at the time of the dear.PL feast.PL of the dear *synty*'], "*kallehen šynnyn kallehen aijan*"[19] ['the dear time of the dear *synty*'], and so forth. One non-ritual yoik opens with the line "*Plahoslovi, šynty paraš*"[20] ['Bless (me or us) best *synty*']. This echoes Karelian lament poetry. Moreover, Mavra Hotejeva, the performer of this particular yoik, was also a well-known lamenter, and some of her laments have been used in this study. In her laments, the same use of *synty* ['divine power'] and its parallel *spuassu* ['divine power'] is also seen, alongside *syndyzet* ['otherworld'] and *Tuonela* ['otherworld'], as is generally found in the Viena Karelian lament tradition. As yoiks are only found in the region of Viena, it is not possible to make broader generalizations about their relationships to laments in other regions (cf. Frog & Stepanova 2011: 206–207).

Synty and synnyt in Kalevalaic Poetry

In Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry, the term *synty* emerges in many different contexts, although not nearly as frequently as in Karelian lament poetry. The term *spuassu* can also be found in kalevalaic poetry, but it is not associated with *synty* and does not appear to belong to the essential lexicon of this poetic system. The different roles and relationships of *spuassu* to these two poetic systems appears to reflect differences in how the traditions

realized through them interfaced with Christianity, from which the term *spuassu* unambiguously derived. It is therefore interesting to observe that the Virgin Mary – who was also unambiguously assimilated from Christianity – permeates kalevalaic traditions, but is completely absent from lament poetry. This is particularly intriguing because lament was a women's genre and the Virgin Mary was a protector and patron of women. This highlights that the stratification of cultural influences may occur very differently in different poetries and genres within a single culture, raising important questions about the relationship of Christianity to the users of these traditions and to their ritual specialists in particular (cf. Frog, this volume). In contrast to the great differences between the presence and prominence of *spuassu* and the Virgin Mary in these traditions, the term *synty* is established in kalevalaic poems of different genres collected in both Karelia and Finland, although it is not found in Ingria. In addition, the term *synty* is also used with its meaning of "origin, birth, emergence" as a term used to designate special types of kalevalaic incantations that present the mythic origin of some phenomenon, illness, object or being in their vernacular names – for example, *Raudan synty* ['The Origin of Iron'], *Tulen synty* ['The Origin of Fire'] etc. (see further Siikala 2002: 84–92). According to Siikala (2002: 86–91, 158–159, 345), these uses of mythic origins of phenomena are rooted in Northern Eurasian shamanism, in which a shaman initiate had to travel to the otherworld in order to acquire knowledge of the origins of beings or different phenomena. Siikala observes:

> According to shamanistic modes of thought, the secret origin of an entity did not merely belong to its mythic beginnings, but exists in the otherworld, as do human ancestors, the dead, who continue their life there – and thus can be reached by those capable of communicating with the supernatural. (Siikala 2002: 90.)

In this case, *synty* is not only associated with mythic knowledge, but the mythic knowledge of origins would seem to parallel the uses of *syndyzet* in laments with reference to dead ancestors. In Finno-Karelian incantations, the vernacular ritual specialist called a *tietäjä* ['knower, one who knows'] uses the power of an illness's *synty* to overcome it or the harm it has caused (e.g. the origin of iron can be used to heal injuries caused by iron objects). The *tietäjä* uses this power to manipulate and command inhabitants and forces in the unseen world. (Siikala 2002: 86–91.) In laments, a lamenter states the existence of the otherworld and its inhabitants using an honorific register and makes requests for help, blessings or visitations. Both types of specialist open communication with the otherworld and its inhabitants, but in different ways: a lamenter explicitly acknowledges the power of the otherworld, but she does not use that power in the real world as does a *tietäjä*. Even if the "otherworlds" of a *tietäjä*-healer and a lamenter are to some degree the same and overlapping, they reflect different features of mythic knowledge according to its use by specialists of different fields.

In kalevalaic poetry, the term *synty* primarily occurs as part of specific formulaic lines used in incantations, for example to heal diseases, raise the

love-power (*lempi*) of a maiden, to prevent harm from the evil eye or when bathing a child. Among these incantations, *synty* also appears in one of the many possible charms with which a *tietäjä* raises his powers:

Nouse luontoni lovesta	Rise, my nature, from the hole,
haon alta haltijani	From beneath the log, my spirit,
syntyni syvästä maasta	My *synty* from the deep earth.
(*SKVR* VII$_4$ 1743, 1–3)	

Synty is here used as a parallel term for the healer's nature and spirit (Järvinen 1959, Haavio 1967: 289–292, Siikala 2002: 250–263). This conventional line-sequence identifies *synty* with the *tietäjä*'s power or its source. There are also formulaic lines in which *synty* is used in a genitive construction, attributing *synty* with agency or ownership of the "words" employed by the healer. This formula is frequently encountered, for example in *Pistoksen synty* ['The Origin of Bite']:

Avulla hyvän jumalan,	With help of the good god,
Toimella totisen luojan,	with the work of the earnest creator,
Sanan voimilla jumalan,	with god's powers of word,
Pyhän synnyn säätämällä.	with that enacted by holy *synty*.
(*SKVR* I$_4$ 842, 145–148)	

This statement asserts the healer's power by attributing its source to strong and mighty authorities. The term *synty* or *suuri synty* ['great *synty*'] appears in a similar parallel construction as a source for mythic ointment used by the *tietäjä* (e.g. *SKVR* I$_4$ 1887, 23–25, VII$_4$ 1785, 13–16). The power of *synty* (or *synti*) for the *tietäjä*-tradition is also apparent when the specialist asks the divine powers to release the patient from disease or the harmful evil eye using formulaic lines such as, *Peästä, syndi, peästä, Luoja*, / *Peästä, peälline Jumala* (*SKVR* VII$_4$ 2026, 7–8) ['Release, *syndi*, release, Creator, / Release, immanent God'], where *synty*/*syndi* is used as a parallel term for the creator, god, as it may elsewhere appear as a parallel terms for (e.g.) *luonto*[21] ['nature, spirit'] or *kolme luonnotarta*[22] ['three Maidens of Nature'].

Synty appears with a meaning of "god" in other kalevalaic poems as well. Huotari Lukkani concludes a poem stating that he, a man with little strength, would not know anything *Jos ei juohata Jumala*, / *Avuttele synty armas* (*SKVR* I$_3$ 1290, 93–94) ['if god does not guide, / if lovely *synty* does not help']. The term *synty* or Great *Synty* also emerges as a noble being independent of use as a parallel term for "god", as in local versions of a blood charm:

suuri syndy ruhtinaine,	great *syndy*, prince.DIM,
azeta veri gu â̭idu,	set the blood as a fence,
seizata veri gu sḙ̂inü!	stop the blood as a wall!
(*SKVR* II, 708, 1–3)	

Kalevalaic wedding poems provide additional parallels when describing the greatness of the *pat'vaška*, "a marriage spokesman and master of ceremonies skilled in magic" (Siikala 2002: 81). For example, when describing the mighty powers which crafted his clothes, songs tell that (among other things) his coat is woven by the Maiden of the New Moon, spun by the Maiden of Daylight, when *Its' oli synti syrjäpuina*, / *Taiv' on toatto stoavapuina* (SKVR I_3 1735, 155–156) ['*Synti* itself was the basewood of the hand loom, / The Father of Heaven was the basewood of the hand loom']. The mighty powers by and with which the *pat'vaška*'s cloths are made help and support the spokesman in his task of protecting the bride and groom from harmful magic during the wedding.

In kalevalaic epic, *synty* has an established place in two songs: *Luojan surma* ['The Death of the Creator'] and *Lemminkäisen virsi* ['The Song of Lemminkäinen']. In *The Death of the Creator*, *synty* emerges repeatedly as a parallel term for the divinity, Jesus's birth is metaphorically compared to the "day of God" and "dawn of *Synty*" in a parallel construction. The genitive construction in the parallel expression equates *Synty* with the God as the one to whom the "day"/"dawn" belongs, rather than with Jesus, who is being referred to as the "day"/"dawn" of God/*Synty*. (Konkka 2007.) The expression appears as direct speech when His mother Moaria asks her maidservant to go to the village in order to see:

Joko synty synnyn koitto,	Whether the dawn of *synty* has already been born,
Paistavi Jumalan päivä,	Shining the day of God,
Herran kuu kumottakan	Burning the moon of the Lord
(*SKVR* II 319, 18–20)	

This genitive construction for agency or ownership corresponds to that in laments and yoiks, but what is interesting in this song's tradition and some of the incantations quoted above, is that *synty* is the first mentioned term to which other expressions are parallel, in which case it appears to be the semantically primary element to which subsequent terms in parallel lines are synonyms (see Steinitz 1934: 136, Anttonen 1994: 123). In other words, "god" appears to function as a synonym for *synty* rather than *synty* only being a poetic synonym for "god" or the Christian "God".

In *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, *synty* or *synti* emerges with an epithet *suuri* ['great'] as parallel term for the gods or inhabitants of the otherworld, as in the following conventional line-sequence (see also Harva 1945, Frog 2010):

Tuonn on Päivölän pitoi	Thence to the feast of Päivölä
Jumalisten juominkii,	To the drinking feast of the gods,
Suuren synnin syöminkii,	To the eating feast of great *synty*,
Parahiksi on laulajiksi,	To become like the best singers,
Parahiks on tietäjiksi[23]	To become like the best *tietäjä*s.
(*SKVR* VII_1, 822, 64–68).	

This describes a feast in the otherworld disrupted by the hero Lemminkäinen.

This is a localized development in the tradition of Border Karelia (Frog 2010: 82–84). Uno Harva (1945: 225) suggests that the feast of *Päivölä* ['Sun-Place'] reached by Lemminkäinen reflects "an otherworld of the blissful, a happy and bright place to dwell." This has been corroborated by Frog's (2010: 342–343) research on this episode in light of a broad range of comparative evidence. He proposes that this reflects earlier conceptions of a celestial realm of the dead which had been adapted for this epic narrative tradition.

Within kalevalaic poetry, *synty* appears as a parallel term for *jumala* ['god'], *luoja* ['creator'] and *luonto* ['nature'] (cf. Steinitz 1934: 213–214) and it is accompanied by the alliterating epithets *suuri* ['great'] and *syvä* ['deep'] as well as *pyhä* ['holy'] and *paras* ['best']. These epithets appear fairly consistent across different genres of kalevalaic poetry, even if they tend to become crystallized in individual formulas. Like epithets in laments, they are always positive. However, the only of these epithets which appear common to the laments are *paras* ['best'] and *armas* ['lovely]. Epithets in laments are otherwise oriented to deference toward pleasant and positive beings that are almost always grammatically marked with diminutive and plural forms. In contrast, neither epithets nor the term *synty* itself employ diminutive or plural markers in kalevalaic poetry, and the epithets emphasize the power and authority of the (singular) mythic being. This is particularly noteworthy in the feast of *The Song of Lemminkäinen*, where "great *synty*" appears in the singular although the preceding term "gods" is in the plural. This suggests that the parallel construction has not emerged through the use of *synty* simply as a parallel term for "god" in the preceding line, but instead that the "feast of Great *Synty*" (singular)" is conceptually equivalent to the "feast of the gods (plural)".[24] This could be attributable to the different types of use of lament poetry and kalevalaic incantations, reflecting the construction of different roles of the ritual specialists in relation to the otherworld and its powers (cf. Frog, this volume).

Conclusions

This paper surveyed the use of *synty*/*syndyzet* and *spuassuset* in different genres of folk poetry within the broader context of ethnographic data. Laments, yoiks and kalevalaic poetry belong to one large region of Finnic traditions. These poetries employ diverse melodies, meters, ways and contexts of performing and diverse performers. In addition, each of these genres is characterized by a different register, although the registers of laments and yoiks on the one hand, and of kalevalaic epic and incantation on the other significantly overlap. However, as this study illustrates, all of these genres exhibit shared mythic conceptions and images related to divine powers, mythic origins and connections with the realm of the dead and dead ancestors. The focus of this article has been on laments and the relationship between features of the essential lexicon of the lament register and the transmission of mythic knowledge.

Several examples have been presented which describe the synthesis of Christian or other models into the vernacular modes of mythological

thinking associated with laments. The Christian influence was clear in the assimilation of *spuassuzet* into the essential lexicon of laments across Karelian lament traditions. Another example appears specific to the region of Viena, where the use of *Tuonela* for the abode of the dead was well established in laments in contrast with its complete absence from other regions of lament tradition. The term *Tuonela* was a significant and powerful element in kalevalaic poetry. The lack of plural and diminutive forms attached to this term in laments contrast with the demands of the lament register. It therefore seems most probable that *Tuonela* was adapted from its use as the kalevalaic designation of a dangerous, dark and generally unpleasant otherworld of the dead, to a positive, bright and pleasant abode of dead members of the family in laments. This is an interesting example of what Tarkka (1990: 238) described as the "intertextual space" between traditions, expanding from her consideration of the "world of epic" to intersecting networks of mythic knowledge and its concepts. Whereas Christian influence is often considered to come from "outside" of a traditional milieu, this adaptation of the concept of *Tuonela* is an example of interaction between the essential lexicon bound to the mythic knowledge of two vernacular traditional genres within a coherent traditional milieu. It emphasizes the dynamics of internal developments of folklore.

This process of developments across genres at intersections of mythic knowledge begins at the level of the individual specialist and performer. In Viena, Mavra Hotejeva made a distinction between terms for divine powers (*synty–spuassu*) and for the otherworld (*syndyzet–Tuonela*). Although this distinction is related to general patterns in the region, this is clearly a developed special feature of her way of singing which is maintained consistently across both her yoiks and laments – e.g. divine powers are not marked with diminutive or plural forms, as is common in kalevalaic poetry. It is therefore worth pointing out that Hotejeva was also a recognized singer of kalevalaic poetry, including genres of epic, wedding songs, incantations, lullabies and new Soviet kalevalaic songs (Niemi 1921: 1089). It is possible to find other performers of both yoiks and laments, as well as those competent in genres of kalevalic poetry. Examining intersections of the lexicon and mythic knowledge for individual singers across these genres, with their implications for broader traditions, could offer an interesting and fruitful area for future research (cf. Pentikäinen 1978). I have done preliminary research in this area on the repertoire and mythic knowledge of Praskovija Saveljeva, who was an exceptional and socially recognized as a lamenter and healer, as well as very competent in a wide range of genres of folklore. As noted above, her essential lament lexicon was clearly structured in ways which were not conventional in the Seesjärvi region. She was such a recognized and significant authority that – had the lament tradition remained vital into the 21st century – she could very possibly have influenced other lamenters and incited restructurings of conceptions of mythic knowledge in her local area. The use of *Tuonela* in Viena laments may have emerged according to a similar process with a singer like Mavra Hotejeva, who refined regional conventions, or like Praskovija Saveljeva who restructured them more dramatically.

The traditional oral poetries which have been addressed here exhibit a network of shared features which include stylistic features such as parallelism and alliteration but also shared terms associated with the lexicon of different genres. These are similar to what Lauri Harvilahti (2003) has described as an ethnocultural substrate, which has historically diffused through the culture's poetic systems. The examples of *synty* and *syndyzet* reveal similar processes. These processes of interaction between different traditions have given rise to what can be described as a *supra-registral lexicon* which includes core terms that are found across genres, across traditions, and across regions of common Finnic registers. A basic example of this is the circumlocution or the substitute name for a "mother", *kantajani* ['my carrier'/'carrier.DIM'], which belongs to the essential lexicon of Finnic laments, Viena yoiks and also that of the Finnic kalevalaic poetries. The terms *synty* and *syndyzet* belong to the *supra-registral lexicon* of the Karelian region. Unlike *kantajani*, the terms *synty* and *syndyzet* are attached to mythic knowledge and mythological modes of thinking about the otherworld.

The analysis above unveils the riddle of whether there was a powerful mythic figure – Great *Synty* – underlying some or many uses of *synty* and *syndyzet*. The use of *synty* in kalevalaic poetry is associated with a powerful mythic being identified with a supreme god or creator and also as a primary term to which "god" and "creator" become parallel expressions. Strikingly, the term is only used in the singular, even in *The Song of Lemminkäinen* where the parallel term is in plural. It is also used in the singular in ethnographic data on customs and belief traditions. This offers at least the possibility that the plural use of the term in laments has developed from the honorific nature of the register (Wilce forthcoming). The discussion of *spuassuzet* in laments and the expansion of its fields of meaning may be approached as an exemplar of more general patterns in the development of different terms' fields of meaning in Karelian laments. The term *spuassu* originated as a foreign Christian term meaning "Saviour" and referring specifically to Jesus, but (apparently) its formal assimilation to the lament register in a diminutive plural form (*spuassuzet*) allowed the term to advance to its use in metonymic reference to "divine powers" generally. In the Seesjärvi region, use of *spuassuzet* as a parallel term for *syndyzet* appears to have further extended its semantic field so that is was also used for the "otherworld abode of the dead". Such fluid and complex processes of semantic development may have taken place with many terms in different dialects of the lament register. Thus, if *synty* functioned to refer to the dead ancestors and powerful supernatural divine beings, it may have come to refer to the location of dead ancestors metonymically in the same manner that *syndyzet* was becoming able to refer to icons metonymically in Viena, and – independently – *spuassuzet* was becoming able to refer to icons metonymically in Olonec. Such a possibility could – at least potentially – have followed on a similar expansion of an earlier *Synty*'s field of meaning from a central divine power to divine powers in the otherworld, just as *spuassu* has done more recently.

Appendix 1.

Fields of meaning of *syndyzet*, *spuassuzet* and *Tuonela*/*Tuoni* within the analyzed corpus according to region and type of lament. Usage is represented in three tables according to region. The left column of each table identifies the type of lament with the number of analyzed texts of that type in parentheses. Other columns identify the number of occurrences of each term in those texts according to its semantic field.

Table 1. Distribution of fields of meaning of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* in Viena laments.

	Tuonela Abode of the Dead	*Syndyzet* (102)					*Spuassuzet* (28)		Total
		Synty Divine Powers	*Synty* Icons	Abode of the Dead	Divine Powers	The Dead	Divine Powers	Abode of the Dead	
Funeral Laments (19)	26	1		66	2		5		100
Wedding Laments (42)		17	4		5		13		39
Non-Ritual Laments (12)	2	1		5	1		10		19
Total (73)	28	19	4	71	8		28		158

Table 2. Distribution of fields of meaning of *syntyzet* and *spuasuzet* in Seesjärvi laments.

	Tuoni	*Syndyzet* (36)			*Spuassuzet* (84)		Total
		Abode of the Dead	Divine Powers	The Dead	Divine Powers	Abode of the Dead	
Funeral Laments (19)	3	31	1		25	33	93
Wedding Laments (31)					10		10
Non-Ritual Laments (10)		4			7	9	20
Total (60)	3	35	1		42	42	123

Table 3. Distribution of fields of meaning of *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet* in Olonec laments.

	Tuoni	*Syndyzet* (129)			*Spuassuzet* (33)			Total
		Abode of the Dead	Divine Powers	The Dead	Divine Powers	Abode of the Dead	Icons	
Funeral Laments (36)	3	44	22	18	11			98
Wedding Laments (52)			33		5		3	41
Non-Ritual Laments (12)		2	10		10		4	26
Total (100)	3	46	65	18	26		7	165

NOTES

1 In Karelian lament texts, *syndyzet* could appear in different linguistic forms: *syndyzet*, *syntyiset*, *syntyset*, depending on the dialectal features of the Karelian language. Hereafter, *syndyzet* will be used to refer generally to all of the possible dialectal forms. However, the documented form will be kept in quoted examples.

2 This term could also appear in laments in different linguistic forms: *spuassuset*, *spoassuzed*, *spoosuset*, depending on the dialectal features of the Karelian language. Hereafter, *spuassuzet* will be used to refer generally to all of the possible dialectal forms. However, the documented form will be kept in quoted examples.

3 For an example from Bangladesh, see Wilce 2002; for an example from Udmurt, see Honko et al. 1993: 569.

4 This includes the Viena Karelians, Olonec Karelians, Ludes and also the Tver Karelians, who migrated from north-western areas around Lake Ladoga to a small area west of Moscow in the 17th century.

5 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 84. This example is from a funeral lament performed by Maria Malikina (born 1886) and collected in Vuonninen, Viena Karelia in 1966.

6 Register has been approached by scholars of different disciplines, such as linguists (e.g. Halliday 1978), linguistic anthropologists (e.g. Agha 2004, Wilce forthcoming), and with diverse adaptations in folklore studies (e.g. Foley 1995, Harvilahti 2003, Frog 2010, Koski 2011, Sykäri 2011).

7 This sort of handling of materials is also seen elsewhere in Haavio's interpretations: cf. Harvilahti & Rahimova, this volume.

8 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 42, 489. This lament was collected in 1968 in the Kiestinki region of Viena Karelia from Anastasija Nikitina (born 1893). The lament was performed on the way to the cemetery during the funeral ritual.

9 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 45. This funeral lament collected in 1967 in Kiestinki area, Viena Karelia, in which lamenter Aksinja Kraskova (born in 1888) thanks the mother in the name of the deceased son for organizing a good memorial feast

and good farewells during the funerals.

10 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 165–168. This example is from the funeral lament performed in Paatene, Seesjärvi Karelia in 1971 by Valentina Martynova (born 1911). It was performed when the deceased was taken from the home to the cemetery.

11 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 165–168. This example is from the funeral lament performed in the village of Mändyselga, Seesjärvi Karelia, in 1970. It was performed when the daughter was arriving to the funeral of her deceased mother at her mother's home.

12 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 244–245. This example is from the funeral lament performed by Anna Kibroeva (born 1888 in Pannila) collected in Sortavala in 1968, performed when the deceased was laid out on the bench at home.

13 Fon. 1338/1. This example is from a funeral lament performed by Praskovja Saveljeva (1913–2002) collected in Mändyselgä, Seesjärvi Karelia in 1973.

14 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 46–47. This wedding lament was collected in 1928 (lamenter unknown) in the Viena region (village unknown). The bride is asking the groom's retinue to make room for her in front of the icons so that she can bow to the icons for the last time before she leaves home.

15 Stepanova & Koski 1976: 117–118. This wedding lament was performed by Mavra Hotejeva (1865–1938) and collected in 1937 in Uhtua, Viena Karelia.

16 Uno Harva (1927: 67–68) mentions that Sámi, Karelians and Icelanders all had memorial ceremonies, feasts and held sacrifices for their dead during Yuletide. These traditions of rituals directed to ancestors in conjunction with Yuletide may very possibly be related to traditions of *syndy*, which – in addition to the ritual activity and beliefs described here – are associated with the otherworld and used as a term referring to ancestors in other ritual activity.

17 Lavonen, Stepanova & Rautio 1993: 95, item 28. This recruit yoik was collected in 1972 from M. I. Kojkerova in the Murmansk region.

18 Lavonen, Stepanova & Rautio 1993: 85, item 19. This wedding yoik was collected in 1983 from S. N. Jakovleva in the village of Zashejek.

19 Lavonen, Stepanova & Rautio 1993: 63, item 5. This wedding yoik was collected in 1956 from I. P. Grigorjeva (place unknown).

20 Lavonen, Stepanova & Rautio 1993: 150, item 73. This non-ritual yoik about everyday life was collected in 1936–1938 from Mavra Hotejeva in the village of Uhtua.

21 E.g. *SKVR* VII_3, 112, 1–2, VII_4 1747, 11–12.

22 E.g. *SKVR* VII_5, 4752, 1–3, XV 674, 170–172.

23 *SKVR* VII_1, 82264–68. Searching the *SKVR* database reveals a total of 18 examples of *The Song of Lemminkäinen* where these lines were used.

24 Although the significance of this equivalence is obscure, it would be consistent with the identification of the feast according to the main group of participants ("gods" or "dead ancestors") on the one hand, and the host (Great *Synty*[?]) on the other (Frog, p.c. 2010). This possibility is more interesting in light of the ethnographic data on Great *Synty* as a being in the celestial sphere whom it is possible to visit by ascending mythic stairs.

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Galina Mišarina

Banishing Rituals and Lament-Incantations of the Komi-Zyrjans

The cultures of many peoples around the world maintain archaic purifying rituals – in other words, banishing rituals – of which the central aim is the protection of people and their livelihood from different types of noxious beings: predatory animals, reptiles, and also representatives of impure spirits. In this paper, the central focus is on Komi[1] rituals for the banishment of bedbugs from houses and thistles from fields. Komi-Zyrjan purifying rituals, such as rituals for banishing bedbugs, exhibit many points of intersection with Komi-Permjak, Udmurt, Finno-Karelian, and Northern Russian traditions for banishing noxious insects. The ritual for banishing thistles appears to be unique to the Komi-Zyrjan – it is not encountered in the cultures of neighbouring or linguistically related peoples. Among Finno-Ugrians and also Slavs, incantations, spells, curses and songs constitute verbal elements of rituals applied in situations of expelling objects which threaten the health and welfare of human beings (see Ternovskaja 1981: 139–159, Plotnikova 2006: 319–372). Lamenting is mentioned in a very few descriptions of purification rituals employed by Russians and Karelians, but the connection remains little explored, with very little evidence of the texts of the relevant laments (e.g. Karelian *SKVR* I_4 1957).

Among the Komi, the expulsion of bedbugs and thistles has been documented both with the recitation of incantations and with lamenting, and expulsion with lamenting is not exceptional but rather typical. In archival collections, texts identified as "laments" by informants – preserved both as manuscript transcriptions and also recorded with melody in solo and collective performances – were merely coincidental to the collection of narrative accounts about banishing rituals. After documenting "lament" texts employed in banishing rituals, Komi collectors and researchers were faced with a problem of classification, and regarded this group of texts as a "forgotten folklore genre" (Mikušev et al. 1994b: 11). One of the reasons that Komi researchers had difficulties with classification was the ritual contexts connected to the performance of these texts. In cultures of the world, the phenomenon of laments following funerals is indeed universal, and among some Finno-Ugric peoples and also among Russians, lamenting has also developed ritual employments in weddings and ceremonies associated with the conscription of men into military service. However, many questions

arise when approaching the apparently unique branch of Komi lamentation material. For example, to which genre does this group of texts belong and what should that genre be called? If these are indeed "laments", as they were referred to by the singers themselves, then what is their relationship to the rituals for the banishment of insects and weeds?

In the present day, genre classification in folkloristics has been left behind in the history of research, yet the category of genre can still be used as a key for understanding and interpreting folklore texts (Tarkka 2005: 68). This paper undertakes an attempt to identify the nature of the genre and an analytical term for this category of problematic texts. It appears to be necessary to address the semantics and pragmatics of some particular ritual objects and actions in order to explicate the sense of performing these texts in connection with banishing rituals. It is unrealistic to approach the tradition in terms of individual texts isolated from one another: they must be situated in an "intertextual library", as has emphasized by Anna-Leena and Jukka Siikala (Siikala & Siikala 2005: 57). This paper will situate the sources subject to analysis in the intertextual library of the broader Komi tradition, from which the "texts" are otherwise severed. This context fulfils and explains the deepest mythological significance which stands at the foundation of the banishing rituals and their laments.

Sources

The first mentions of banishing bedbugs among Komi-Zyrjans date to the beginning of the 20th century and are connected with a source describing how feasts were held in Komi villages (OF NMRK № 2259). A. S. Sidorov included a description of the ritual for banishing bedbugs in his book *Znaxarstvo, koldovstvo i porča naroda komi* ['Healing, Magic and Curses of the Komi People'], published in St. Petersburg in 1928. The author claims that this is also paralleled by "witchcraft for expelling cockroaches from a house" (Sidorov 1997 [1928]: 81–82). Across the past century, material on rituals for the banishment of bedbugs and thistle has now been collected from among different ethnic sub-groups of Komi. According to the sources, these rituals are connected to particular calendric dates, although in urgent circumstances, they could also be conducted at any other time. Bedbugs are banished at Christmas, Maundy Thursday, St. John's Day (Midsummer) or the Day of St. Peter. The ritual banishment of thistles was conducted on the eve or day of the Day of St. Elijah (Ilja), and also before the harvest of crops.

In the Upper Vyčegda region, thistles are expelled in the following way: On the eve of the Day of St. Elijah, thistles are "mown-hewn" with a burned fire poker, which is then thrust into the ground with the words: "if the fire poker sprouts leaves, then there will be thistles" (FA SyktGU 1573–34). People could also wave a fire poker over thistles – in other words imitating the act of mowing with the fire poker. While doing this, the person who is "mowing" begins a ritual dialogue with him- or herself, "asking" *Myj ytškan? – Jön ytška!* (Мый ытшкан? – Йӧн ытшка!) ['What are you mowing? – I am mowing thistles!'] (FA SyktGU RF 15-X-8). The ritual of bearing away

thistles with laments is documented in the Ižma and Pečora regions. The Komis of Ižma take thistles which have been pulled up by the roots and bind them "in three times nine", then one group of women walk backward, dragging the thistles toward the river, while other women lash the thistles with switches and lament (NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.206). Among the Komis of the Pečora region, the largest thistle is pulled up from the grain field with lamentations and it is replanted on the road (NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.186).

There is far more data about rituals for expelling bedbugs, both in terms of the number of local variants as well as the overall volume of data. A few variants of the ritual presented here will offer an illustration:

1. Bedbugs are bundled into a piece of cloth, and this is placed in a birch bark shoe (with variants of a rubber overshoe or a matchbox). This is tied to a stick, by which it is dragged along the ground to a place where three roads meet, where a circle is drawn and the birch bark shoe is left inside the circle (FA SyktGU 1911-32, FA SyktGU RF 12-XVI-40).
2. The bundle of bedbugs is tied to a fire poker, and one straddles the fire poker and goes around the house in a circle, after which he or she goes to the cemetery and the bundle is buried near a grave (FA SyktGU 1911-37).
3. Bedbugs are collected into a pouch or sack which is then bound to the wagon of a beggar who is passing through the village (NA KNC № 645-27).

The following material was documented from an 86-year-old woman in the year 2000 in the village of Kerčom'a. She describes how the ritual was conducted and how the verbal texts were incorporated into the ritual:

> In our village, people got rid of bedbugs on the same day [Maundy Thursday]. I saw myself how Ëgor Öksin' ['Aksinja, wife of Ëgor'] got rid of them on that day. She bore them away. She put the bedbugs into an old rubber overshoe, and it is necessary to drag them from home to the place where three roads meet. And one [person] drags it and Aksinja herself began to cry really loudly. And she began to walk near us and we were frightened, we even came outside with our families to see who was weeping so loudly. But she is walking behind a rubber overshoe and lamenting:
>
> Дитяӧй, челядьӧй, дитяй, челядь, дитяй и челядь,
> А кытчӧ и мунанныд барай-а,
> А коді барай кутас миянлы мешайтчыны,
> А мый бара и сёйны понданныд,
> А тшыглы вед и куланныд.
> А мыйла бара-й колляныд ассыныд чужан гортнытӧ,
> А кор бара и аддзысьлам,
> Дзикӧдз вылӧ тай и мунанныд.
> А зэв гораа бӧрда да он на тай и кылӧй.
> Мунанныд ас вӧлясьыд да миянӧс и колянныд.

My dear child, my children, my dear child, my children, my dear child and my children,
And whither are you departing.
And who will disturb us,
And what will you eat,
And yet from starvation you will die.
And why did you leave your own house of your birth,
And when will we see each other again,
You are leaving forever.
And I cry very loudly, yet you do not hear,
You are living as you desire and leaving us.

So that is how she is lamenting and walking. After she says this once, she begins the same again. And for us, it was funny and we were sneaking along behind her and listening. But it wasn't allowed to laugh out loud – we were struggling to keep from bursting out in laughter. When you come to the place where three roads meet, then you draw a circle and leave them there with the rubber overshoe. If the overshoe is new – then you leave them in a matchbox. (FA SyktGU RF 12-XVI–40.)

To the Otherworld

Alongside referring to these rituals in terms of expelling or banishing, the sources reveal that informants also used expressions such as *petködny* ['bearing away'], as used to describe a funeral procession, and *koll'ödny* ['seeing off'], as used to describe funerals and military conscription ceremonies. These folk terms for the rituals are based on conceptions that insects and plants are transported from one place to another within the frame of the ritual. The locations, to which objects are moved, are presented by several iso-semantic loci of the Komi tradition: a river, the place where three roads meet, a cemetery, a neighbouring house or the wagon of a beggar. The relocation of bedbugs and thistles to a river is connected with mythological conceptions about the river as a boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead, or as a path leading to the otherworld. (Konakov et al. 2003: 322–323.)

In Komi culture, the place where three roads meet emerges as a location at which the boundaries between parallel worlds become interpenetrable and capable of special communication during certain periods of time (cf. Lintrop, this volume). For example, six weeks after a death (i.e. on the fortieth day), the relatives of the deceased gather for a memorial at which they see off a person chosen as the "proxy of the deceased", accompanying him through the village and leaving him at the place where three roads meet. From there, the "proxy of the deceased" cannot look back nor return to the house where the memorial feast continues. It was believed that an unseen substance of the deceased – a substance that remained in the home following the death – departs with the "proxy of the deceased" (personal observations). The place where three roads meet was also a traditional location for conducting Yuletide fortune telling, through which channels

of communication were opened with representatives of the otherworld that were able to foretell the future. The place where three roads meet was also considered a point of access for communication with the otherworld when a birch bark shoe or bundle of bedbugs was brought there. It was believed that is was possible to pass into another world at this location, however it was impossible for anything to cross the same boundaries into the world of the living, as was the case in memorial ritual described above and in fortune telling. (Dukart 1978: 99–100.)

Images of the otherworld and paths into the otherworld are extremely diverse. The otherworld could be maximally remote from the world of the living, or it could also be situated in the immediate proximity of human beings. According to Albert Bajburin (1993: 185), the "other" begins where "one's own" ends, and depending on the situation, this boundary can become moveable and travel with a human being. Thus, bedbugs were carried to a neighbour's because space beyond one's own yard already no longer belonged to one's own world, but to the world of the "other". The road appears also as a sort of boundary between one's own world and the world of the "other", thus the largest thistle was planted on the road, as described above (e.g. NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.186). In traditional culture, not only loci but also people can be characterized as belonging to the otherworld. People are characterized as belonging to the otherworld by the attribution of one or more social features which are impoverished or deficient. Tying bedbugs onto the wagon of a beggar, for example, is based on conceptions of beggars as representatives of the otherworld because they do not belong to the social space occupied by the majority of the community, and are therefore "other" (Semjonov 1992: 45).

Alongside "bearing away" and "seeing off", informants used to refer to the ritual for banishing bedbugs as a "bedbug funeral": *ludik gualöm* (лудік гуалöм), *ludik dzeböm* (лудік дзебöм) (cf. the Komi verb *guavny* (гуавны), *dzebny* (дзебны) ['to bury a deceased person']). This term for the banishment ritual, as well as source data on physically burying the bedbugs in a cemetery, unequivocally demonstrate that the banishment ritual references the funeral ritual. In addition to burying bedbugs in the same place where deceased people are buried, the transportation of the bedbugs to the otherworld in an old birch bark shoe or old rubber overshoe as a coffin is another parallel between these two rituals.

According to Dmitrij Baranov (2005: 212–227), when exploring the semantics of objects from everyday life employed in a ritual context, it is important to give consideration to that object's form, material, texture, colour, and its common patterns of use. Within the context of banishment rituals, the form of the shoe appears to be the feature of foremost significance. When the expulsion of the insects is framed as "seeing off", "bearing away" and as a "funeral", the form of the birch bark shoe, rubber overshoe or matchbox replacing this shoe allows it to assume the function of a "new home" – that is, a coffin – when situated in the ritual. In the Komi language, *gort* (горт) means both "home, house" and "coffin". Therefore, just as a new, alternative *gort* is built for the deceased at his departure from the *gort* of the living, the bedbugs who are leaving "home" (*gort*) are offered a new home which is reminiscent in its form to a coffin.

The Russian researcher D. K. Zelenin provides an example of the similar ritual significance of old shoes among Udmurts when presenting comparative material as a context for Slavic rituals. Udmurts used old worn-out birch bark shoes when seeing off deceased parents who had been invited to a memorial feast. Feathers and coal were put into the birch bark shoe and thus taken out of the village while one of the men blew on the coal in the birch bark shoe and recited: "Eat, drink, and depart from here, Elders, whosoever envies us, lead that one away with you, our enemies, witches, lead away with you." (Zelenin 1994: 221–222.)

Visitors from the Otherworld

One archive source describes throwing out bedbugs over the back of one's hand[2] from the porch of the house while reciting the following phrase: *Kys' loktinnyd, setčö i munöj!* (кысь локтінныд, сэтчӧ и мунӧй!) ['From whence you came, thither you go!'] (Mikušev et al. 1994b: 11). Researchers have observed that in folklore texts, worlds are often marked by deictic expressions, such as "here–there", "this–that" or "hence–thither" (e.g. Tarkka 2005: 301). This is also characteristic of Komi folklore texts, and therefore the phrase addressed to the bedbugs above could be paraphrased as follows: "From the otherworld you came, so to the otherworld you go."

In traditional culture, representatives of the otherworld are often attributed with features of something threatening, dangerous, impure, etc. Conceptions of insects and weeds as threatening are attributable not only to the practicalities of discomfort which they inflict on people, but also because their appearance, proliferation and disappearance are apprehended through mythological conceptions. Among Komis, insects, worms, butterflies, lizards, etc. presented images which were connected to the "manifestation" of certain types of illnesses, such as *ševa* (шева) or *iköta (*икӧта) and "spoiling". It is believed that those people who are able to "spoil" other people pass illnesses in the form of (among other things) insects that penetrate the body of a victim with food or water. One of the widespread varieties of "spoiling" is caused by a *ševa*. *Ševa*s are beings which are kept by a witch in the form of bugs or worms, and the master of these *ševa*s must feed them with his or her own body, and a woman more specifically with her own milk. It is necessary to spread *ševa*s or else their master must "pay with his own body", much as is the case with bedbugs, which survive through the consumption of human blood. (Sidorov 1997 [1928]: 109.) In addition, drinking blood is one means of contacting the otherworld in Komi traditional culture. For example, ritual blood-drinking could be conducted with the aim of obtaining the power of a sorcerer (Uljašev 2011).

In spoken Komi language, the semantic field of the word *jön* (йӧн) ['thistle'] includes all thorny weeds which grow rigorously, especially in cultivated fields. These weeds were detrimental to crops, which already faced the challenges of the northern climate. The physical manifestations of these plants – their thorniness, size and rigorous growth – probably impacted how they were conceptualized in Komi folk culture, where they were considered as harmful, dangerous, and "other".

Protection from Sources of Danger

Elena Levkievskaja (2002) has devoted one of her studies to magical means for the protection of human beings and their world from danger in apotropaic situations in Slavic culture. According to Levkievskaja (2002: 17), the general features of apotropaic situations are universal, and the nature of the apotrope is not necessarily dependent on the situation.

A whole set of apotropes – acts or objects – can be distinguished in the Komi banishing rituals examined here. For example, thistles can be either mown and hewn literally or this action can merely be imitated, and the bundle with bedbugs is lashed with a switch. Levkievskaja observes corresponding ways of acting in many situations for expelling danger. She refers to this schema for the realization of an apotropaic situation as "striking a blow". According to Levkievskaja, apotropes with these semantics are oriented to harming the source of danger. (Levkievskaja 2002: 73.) By lashing thistles or a bundle of bedbugs with a switch and by mowing and hewing weeds with a fire poker, the performer of the ritual "cripples" the dangerous objects, making them weak and unable to cause harm in the future.

The schema of surrounding the object or enclosing it in a circle (Levkievskaja 2002: 27) is realized in different ways within the ritual for banishing bedbugs, such as circling a house three times while straddling a fire poker or drawing a circle around the shoe or bundle of bedbugs at the place where three roads meet. In Komi culture, the schema of surrounding or encircling is found, for example, in funeral rituals, wedding rituals and fortune telling during the Christmas season (among others), where it is employed according to the semantics of preventing harm from dangers (Plesovskij 1968: 122, Semjonov 1992: 31–34). In banishing rituals, making a circle around an object – whether an object which should be protected or an object which is the source of danger – creates a boundary which prevents contact between the potential victim and the source of harm. Winding a thread around a bundle of bedbugs can correspondingly be interpreted as a means of isolating the source of danger from human beings.

Banishing rituals incorporate acts of inverted movement, which may be movements performed in a reversed direction, such as walking backward, or throwing over the back of one's hand.[2] A. K. Mikušev (1973: 38) recognizes direct parallels between walking backward to the river with a bunch of thistles and funeral customs of the Komi's neighbours, the Nenets, who walk backward during funerals in order to confuse their tracks and thereby protect of living. It is worth pointing out that a whole complex of actions with reversed direction are encountered in Komi funeral rituals, where they are also employed as a means of protecting the living from harmful qualities of the deceased (see also Semjonov 1991: 31).

A fire poker is used in the performance of both banishing rituals addressed in this paper: it functions as a means of "transportation" from home to the river or from home to the cemetery, it is used to circle the house while astride it, and it is also used to "mow" thistle. In addition to uses of the fire poker in these rituals, a fire poker is also used in a Komi children's game,

in which the house spirit is invited from the cellar into the house for a meal: in order to send the house spirit back to the cellar, participants in the game throw the fire poker to the floor or knock on the floor with the fire poker. (Nesanelis 1994: 3, 96–98, Konakov et al. 2003: 222–223.) Researchers of Russian traditional culture point out that the polysemic quality of the fire poker in ritual derives from its utilitarian crookedness, its connection to fire and to the oven, and also its function of gathering and separating hot coals in the oven (e.g. Baranov 2005: 224). This, and its role in extinguishing fire, could potentially be the foundation for the attribution of protective qualities to the fire poker – as well as to the bread paddle, which was used in Komi as an amulet against dead witches who had risen from the grave (Konakov et al. 2003: 226–227).

In one of the dialects of the Komi language, the term for "fire poker" is *koköljuka* (*кокӧлюка*), which is the near-homonym of *Koklja-Moklja* (Кокля-Мокля), the name of the spirit which lives under the floor of a forest shack. In its turn, *Koklja-Moklja* is a homophonic parallel to the words *čuklja-muklja* (чукля-мукля) ['crooked-curved'] (Konakov et al. 2003: 178–179). Crookedness is known to be a physical feature, not only of fire pokers, but also of demonological figures, such as house spirits, forest spirits and water spirits, among others (Limerov 1998: 78). In a Komi house, the fire poker was usually kept in a special place – e.g. under the oven or in front of the entrance to the *golbec*, a long cupboard along the left side of the oven. These loci were associated with the otherworld, as locations inhabited by the house spirit, and the *golbec* was a place for burying ancestors (Nalimov 1907: 4–5). In mythological consciousness, the fire poker was connected to images of representatives of the otherworld as a crooked, burned and blackened object connected with fire, while keeping the fire poker on the threshold between the habitations of people and spirits led the fire poker to be considered a sort of protector of the inhabitants of the upper world. Correspondingly, the fire poker was attributed with the semantics of a repelling apotrope employed in banishing rituals at the moment of contact with the otherworld.

A possible explanation for understanding the "transportation" functions of the fire poker can be observed in the term for the object itself: the initial component of *koköljuka* is *kok* ['leg']. The correlation of the fire poker with a leg according to its form transforms it into a means of transportation which becomes actualized as such, not in ordinary, but rather in ritual contexts. Moreover, the fire poker secures the performer of the ritual against dangers in the movement in the direction of the otherworld. It appears that the stick mentioned in the descriptions of the ritual is a substitute for the fire poker, to which it fills an analogous pragmatic role.

A Forgotten Folklore Genre

In 1960, collectors of Komi folklore happened to document what they described as "a forgotten folklore genre" in the village of Mutnyj Materik in the Ižemskij District of the Komi Republic. The group of collectors included

a musicologist, and considered what they had found to be close to Komi laments in both melody and poetic system. (Mikušev et al. 1994b: 11.) The process of their research revealed that the contexts of this "forgotten genre" were rituals for banishing bedbugs and thistles. In research literature, for example, performers of these texts are sometimes referred to as "weepers" or "singers", and description of the texts are correspondingly inconsistent – for example, in one account, "the *lament* went on without a break while the bedbugs were put into the matchbox," is followed immediately by the statement that "*songs* about banishing are documented [...]" (Mikušev 1973: 39, my emphasis). Such descriptions are indicative of the difficulty that researchers had in classifying this phenomenon, which was not referred to by any one consistent designation. In academic literature, researchers refer to this genre variously as "incantational laments" (заклинательные заплачки), "incantational songs" (заклинательные песни), "incantation-songs" (песни-заклинания), "incantation-lament" (плач-заговор), "incantational improvisations" (заклинательные импровизации) and "incantation-songs of the agrarian cycle" (песни-заклинания аграрного цикла) (e.g. Konakov 1993, Mikušev 1993, Filippova 1996). This abundance of terms for a single phenomenon betrays the problems of categorizing this group of texts according to established conceptions of the genre system of Komi folklore – conceptions developed on the basis of the genre system of Russian folklore. In the genre system of Russian folklore (as in the traditions of other cultures), texts of this sort do not exist or are not classified either in terms of their manner of performance or in terms of the verbal system which they employ.

The first to employ the adjective "incantational" with reference to these texts was A. K. Mikušev, who observed that these texts were performed like laments but functioned as incantation poetry. However, it was already observed in the process of collection that these texts "do not have the stability typical of incantations," and that they were characterized by improvisation, which is one of the ways to create Komi lament poetry. (Mikušev et al. 1994b: 11.) Because these texts of banishing rituals were not simply recited, but were performed with melody, they were identified as "songs". The possibility warrants consideration that, in the mid-20th century, local collectors of folklore and those interested in Komi song traditions in particular, discovered this "forgotten genre" precisely because it was not recitational but rather accompanied by melody – i.e. it was "sung". The genre was referred to as "incantation-songs of the agrarian cycle" because the ritual for banishing thistles was conducted at the beginning of the agricultural season. The informants themselves were, of course, not interested in genre classifications. While describing the ritual, informants most often referred to the process as "lamenting" or characterized their own actions as "doing something with a lament". Texts documented separately from their contexts were labelled according to the descriptions of the informants, such as "Lament for a Bedbug" (Бӧрдӧдчанкыв лудіклы), "For a Bedbug" (Лудіклы), "Seeing Off a Bedbug" (Лудікӧс колльӧдӧм), "During the Funeral of a Bedbug" (Лудікӧс дзебигӧн), and so forth (e.g. NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.246 "b").

Characteristics of the Texts

These texts have a communicative nature. It is typical that each text address an addressee, identified as bedbugs or thistles. References to bedbugs and thistles in these texts are structurally similar to circumlocutions for the addressees in Komi funeral, wedding and military conscription laments. These references are created with deverbal participles, such as *paledys'* (паледысь) ['awakening one' = bedbug] and *gažedys'* (гажедысь) ['joy-bringer' = bedbug], or composed with the help of nouns, such as *së majbirej* (сё майбирей) ['my hundred-times blessed one' = bedbug]. These can be compared to, for example, referring to a mother as *čöskyd jölön verdys'* (чöскыд йöлöн вердысь) ['one who feeds with tasty milk'] in a wedding lament. In the following example, references to bedbugs are marked in italic font:

Сё майбирей пе дай
Менчим чöскид ун паледысей,
Сёр водтöдісей да *водз чеччедысей*.
Тэнэ вед ме мешеке сюя дай мöдэда.
Менам вед сэсся *ун паледісид оз ло* да,
Дыр кута узьні да
Удж вылад коля, чуксалісид *ке оз ло*.
(NA KNC № 645-27a)

My hundred-times blessed one and
One awakening me from a dear dream,
One forcing me late to bed and *one making me get up early*.
You, I will press into a sack and will send you away,
I will no longer have *a from a dream awakening one* and,
I will sleep longer and
Will be late for work if there will not be *an awakening one*.

Bedbugs could also be referred to as *menö pervoj gažödys'öj* (менö первой гажедысьöй) ['my first to me joy-bringing one'], *mens'ym čöskyd virös juys'öj* (менсьым чöскыд вирöс юысьöй) ['my tasty blood drinking one'], *bur gös't'* (бур гöсьть) ['good guest'], and so forth. When a performer uses the common nouns *ludyk* (лудык) ['bedbug'], or *jön* (йöн) ['thistle'], then this usage is invariably accompanied by an epithet which provides the terms with positive associations, such as *šondibanöj* (шондібанöй) in *šondibanöj ludiköj* (шондібанöй лудыкöй) ['my sun-faced bedbug']. Respect could be expressed by using a name with a patronymic, for example, addressing a bedbug as *Ludyk Clopotovič* (Лудук Клопотович) ['Bedbug Worryson'] or *Ludyk Ludykovič* (Лудык Лудыкович) ['Bedbug Bedbugson'], and by addressing a thistle as *Totarin Totarinovič* (Тотарин Тотаринович) ['Tartar Tartarson']. It is useful to point out that some dialects of Russian also exhibit the name *tatarnik* (татарник) used to refer to thorned plants. As Kolosova (2001: 62–72) observes, the folk-naming of a plant using a foreign groups' ethnonym is connected with negative characteristics of the plant or that the plant is associated with something negative for the people. "Tartar" is not

an arbitrary epithet or metaphorical substitute for "thistle": the category of "other" is marked as "Tartar" in Komi folklore, thus in wedding laments, for example, the kin of the groom are referred to metaphorically as "Tartars" (e.g. NA KNC F.1. Op. 11. Ed.hr. 220).

It is characteristic of these texts that a set of verbal strategies provides the speech-act with the quality that performers are mourning and distressed because the bedbugs or thistles are leaving. This quality of the texts makes them closer to the texts of laments. This distress and mourning is expressed through the use of rhetorical questions, such as "How will I live?" and "Who will wake me up early?" posed to the bedbugs or thistles. In addition to rhetorical questions, statements expressing being upset owing to separation are also present in these texts. These describe how the speaker and addressee will never see each other again, that the speaker will no longer have someone to cherish, no one will wake her up in the night, no one will give her joy.

The texts also contain statements offering apologies and requests for forgiveness from the bedbugs or thistles, from their "brothers, sisters and relatives", and performers could express their concern over the future destiny of the departing bedbugs or thistles.

These texts are also characterized by expressions in which ritual actions can be commented on or described. In these expressions, the performer inserts herself as the executor of ritual action through the personal pronoun "I" or "we". The performer addresses the addressee of the text with the pronoun "you" and informs the addressee of what she is doing at that moment or what she is about to do. The "I" (or the "we") informs the bedbugs that she is going to put them into a cloth and take them to the place where three roads meet, or that she is going to put them into a sack and escort them and place them in the earth. In the Ižma region, motifs commenting on ritual actions are introduced into laments to bedbugs and thistles in compositional blocks as wholes. The following example offers an illustration of one of these compositional blocks, taken from a recording made in 1960:

Эжтыр Луд Лудыкес мӧдам мӧдэдны бур рӧдвужъяснанум,
Эжтыр Луд Лудыкес мӧдам мӧдэдны бур вок-чойнанум,
Куим ӧкмыс тіянтэ кучам чукартны кӧребыс пытшке,
Сэсся нин тіянтэ кучам сыра земля нуэдны матюра пытшке,
Картыр рӧдвужъен ті помласьныд мӧдам укеренитны бур рӧдвужъяслы,
Эжтыр Луд Лудыкес мӧдам нуэдны ті помныд бур вок-чойнанум.
Ас олыг сэсся ми мӧдэдім векыс кеже,
Водзе нин Лудікес сэсся ми сэчче пуктім вотэм вылэ,
Бӧре нин Лудікес сэсся ми пуктім костэм вылэ,
Сыра земля ми пуктім петтэм вылэ. (NA KNC F.1. Op. 11. D.206.)

And now we are going to escort you, Lud Ludykös, with your nest filled with good relatives,
And now we are going to escort you, Lud Ludykös, with your good sisters-brothers,
Three times nine of Lud Ludykös, we are going to gather into the box,
Then we are going to take you inside the *syra zemlja* [= 'earth, cemetery dirt'],
Because of you, we are going to destroy the nest filled with your relatives,
And now we are going to escort you, Lud Ludykös, with your cover filled with good sisters-brothers,

Then from our life, we send [you] for all time,
Already we put the Ludyk ['Bedbug'] in the box, that you cannot come back anymore,
Back we put the bedbug, that he cannot return again,
Into *syra zemlja* [= 'earth, cemetery dirt'], we put, that he cannot return.

Expressions commenting on ritual action are also typical of other types of laments. Funeral ceremonies provide a foundational model over which the banishment ritual is mapped, generating analogical motifs to those of Komi funeral laments, such as those which comment on ritual action, describe escorting the deceased, placing the deceased in the coffin, setting the deceased in the ground under twelve meters of earth, etc. Taken together, the features discussed above along with the slow melody, which according to collectors was analogical to the melodies of other laments, as well as information about lamenting from descriptions of the rituals and comments made by collectors – all of this taken together allows this group of texts to be interpreted as laments. Bearing in mind the information regarding context, and without rejecting the definition proposed by A. K. Mikušev, I propose that laments of this type should be designated "lament-incantations".

Feelings, Parody, Performative Tears

The situational relationship of laments to different types of farewells and their manner of mixing melody and physical weeping with verbal expressions reflecting the experience of distress have led researchers to refer to laments as a genre in academic literature as "the poetry of sadness" (Konkka 1992), "the poetry of grief of all peoples" (Haavio 1935: 211–240), and "a poetry primarily related to tragic circumstances within everyday family rituals and in everyday life" (Čistov 2005: 189). Of course, in addition to the emotional element in verbal, musical and vocal components of laments, researchers also perceived reflections of religious, mythic and broad cultural conceptions of this or that ethnic group (e.g. Haavio 1935, Honko 1963: 81–82, Tolstaja 1999: 135–149). If laments were understood exclusively in terms of emotions resulting from distress, then weeping and distress at the expulsion of agents hazardous to human beings and their households constructs a contradictory and illogical picture from the point of view of the general semantics of the ritual banishment.

As mentioned above, information has been preserved about lamenting among Slavs during rituals associated with the folk calendar, including during rituals for the banishment of flies, bedbugs and cockroaches. Russian researchers observed a playful tone in calendar laments of this type, and thus defined them as parodic laments (Altšuler 2007: 19). Parody (from the Greek παρῳδία ['a burlesque song or poem']) is by its nature the intentional reuse of something else in a form which generates a comical effect. The term parody describes a caricature, satire or lampoon which imitates it object in a grotesque, comical and ironic way (Efremova 2000). Richard Bauman (2004: 5) approaches parody as a type of intertextuality which "involves the ludic or inversive transformation of a prior text or genre."

According to many researchers, within typologies of laments, wedding laments and laments performed at conscription into military service have genetically arisen from the universal genre of funeral laments (Čistov 2005: 189–190, Honko 1963: 81–86, Nenola 1978: 76–77). Albert Bajburin (1985: 66) points out that lamenting has reference to funerals in all rituals and ritual situations. Lament-incantations "reuse" the generic characteristics of other types of laments and have an intertextual relationship to them. However, this reuse lacks transformations which would provide a mocking or comic character to the content and style. Moreover, in their descriptions, Komi informants frequently emphasize that under no circumstance can one laugh during the execution of these rituals. They report that laughing would interrupt the process of the ritual, at the same time asserting that the lament was a means by which the main pragmatic goals of the ritual could be accomplished. (NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.206, FA SyktGU RF 12-XVI-40.) The use of lament in the banishment of objects harmful to human beings is not attributable to genuine emotions, yet the ban on laughter and the lack of irony in the verbal fabric of texts reveal not parody but a consciously orchestrated scene and the performative nature of ritual lament-incantations.

There is no doubt that separation and loss or its anticipation naturally provoke an emotional response during funerals, weddings, and rituals for departure into military service – contexts in which traditional laments were performed. However, on the whole, ritual laments are not an uncontrolled form of expression for these emotions: as Aili Nenola (2002: 30, 75), a researcher of Ingrian laments, has emphasized, lamenting is a learned, ritually conditioned and socially constrained mode of behaviour. Gary Ebersole (2004: 187) uses the term "performative tears" for "those shed in ritual proper or in ritualized social situations that perform cultural works." Therefore, bearing in mind the meaning of the word "performative", laments executed in rituals can be interpreted as partially orchestrated performances, of which the impact is directed at accomplishing certain concrete goals.

The term "performative" is quite new to the literature on the lament traditions of Northern Europe and was not used in the earlier research. Nonetheless, the available data is sufficient to attest to the performative character of laments. The performativity, the feignedness of tears is easily observed in situations where the motivation for the lament appears, at first glance, to be the welling-up of powerful emotions. Thus Albert Hämäläinen (1913: 242), who researched Mordvin wedding rituals and laments, reached the conclusion that the laments of a bride were "attributable to a need to show the difficulty of separation to the dead ancestors and house spirits, and at the same time, to obtain their benevolence so that they would not cause any harm when she moved to a new place to live." Unelma Konkka (1992: 127) points out that the prosperous married life of a Karelian woman was directly dependent on the laments performed at her wedding. The example presented below is taken from an Ingrian wedding song. The passage observes that the crying on this night can guarantee a happy marriage without tears in the future:

Itke, itke, Anni-seukko,	Cry, cry, sister Anni,
Itke vaikka suotta.	Cry, even without reason.
Ko et itke tänä iltaan,	If you do not cry this evening,
Itket monta vuotta.	You will cry for many years.
(Asplund 1995: 81.)	

It is difficult to imagine that only natural crying held some type of power, otherwise ritual lament would not be a synthesis of weeping, melody and words. Among folklorists, the magical power of the word is commonly associated with incantation poetry (e.g. Tarkka 2005: 87). Evidence of the magical power of incantations is easy to find in information about the contexts in which this genre is employed, as well as in speech-acts such as "go away!" "disappear!" "be gone!" "I banish you!" etc.

When considering the power of the word in the middle of the last century, the Finnish researcher Jouko Hautala reached the conclusion that not only incantations have power, but also laments:

> In funeral laments, speech is directed at the deceased: the intention is to remove doubts that the causes of his death are on the heads of those present, to reassure the deceased; he needs to hear that he is mourned so that he does not become angry. [....] The main purpose [...] of wedding laments has been magical: safeguarding and protecting the bride from dangers, especially from those dangers coming from her own dead ancestors. (Hautala 1960: 39.)

The Russian researchers V. I. Eremina and K. V. Čistov have addressed the magical aspects of Russian funeral laments. The former proposes that funeral laments are closely related to incantations, and that incantations are present in the fabric of funeral laments (Eremina 1981: 70–86), while the latter emphasizes that funeral laments have a magical function (Čistov 1994: 267–274). Both researchers reached these conclusions on the basis of the presence of motifs in which lamenters use an imperative construction, for example commanding the plank of the coffin to open and the deceased to rise up. According to Čistov (1994: 273), the magical function of these motifs had already transformed into an emotional rhetorical strategy by the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

The Komis attributed tremendous significance to the performativity of ritual lamenting, as attested by numerous factors. The tradition clearly regulated the places and times for lamenting, as well as the clothes of the lamenter, which should conform to certain conventions. A lamenter was believed to have special abilities, and among the Komi, a lamenter and healer were often one and the same person. Lamenters were invited to funerals, not because the relatives of the deceased were necessarily unable to lament themselves, but because a lamenter was an irreplaceable ritual specialist, who, among other things, incited tears in everyone present through the movements of her body, the mournfulness of her voice, and the melody and touching quality of her words. The Komis believed that the borders between worlds were opened during lamenting, and that the lamenter herself was in direct contact with the otherworld, as a consequence

of which, she had to shake out her clothes after lamenting (Plesovskij 1962: 122). The performance of a lament in an inappropriate place or at an inappropriate time was correspondingly believed to be hazardous to the world of the living, and such an inappropriate performance was even thought capable of causing a new death (NA KNC F.5. Op.2. D.209 "a").

The Power of Laments in Banishment Rituals

According to informants, "If you remove it with laments, thistle-Tartar won't grow back in a field. His family won't stay in the field."(Бӧрдэдам, мед сылэн рӧдвужыс му вылас из коль. Бӧрдэмен ке нуан, тӧтарин йӧн выльысь оз пет.) (NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.206.) Lamenting for bedbugs was explained to collectors as follows: "A bedbug has no heart, because of which he won't die without lamenting" (Лудукыс сьӧлӧмтэм да бӧрдтэгыс оз и куу) (NA KNC F.1. Op.11. D.206). Behind these explanations stands a belief in the power of laments, according to which laments are able to banish and kill, and to prevent the return of the lamented. This power infuses all of the components of laments which are realized in performance: the manner of performance, gestures, voice, mournful melody, and of course the verbal element. The word *kyv* (кыв) ['word'] is present in *bördankyv* (бӧрданкыв) [literally 'crying word' or 'word which makes one cry'], the emic Komi term for "ritual lament". Expressions such as *lyddödlyny* (лыддьӧдлыны) ['reciting'] and *lydd'ödlömön bördny* (лыддьӧдлӧмӧн бӧрдны) ['crying with the recital of words'] are also often used among the Komis to refer to ritual lamenting as an action.

When using rhetorical questions, which are so typical of laments, performers do not expect answers: these questions have different goals. In lament-incantations, a performer gives expression to the impossibilities of being without bedbugs in the future and voices distress at their separation with questions such as, "How will I live without you?" In this way, she affirms her own innocence in the banishment process to the addressee and gains the addressee's loyalty. The slow melody, inseparable from the words of a lament, and the accompanying performative tears, help to "convince" the addressee that the performer is mourning, and thus conceal the true intention of expulsion.

Discussions on the performativity of language are rooted in analytical philosophy, of which one of the representatives is J. L. Austin, author of the famous work *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Austin did not depict language as a passive tool for describing reality, but rather showed the capacity of language to create reality through words (Austin 2006: 262–282). Austin's address of this aspect of language provided a foundation for later scholars, who developed it into Speech-Act Theory. Speech-acts in which the illocutionary goal is not directly reflected in its linguistic structure were referred to as "indirect speech-acts". According to John R. Searle, in speech-acts of this type, a speaker expresses a sentence which means precisely that which is stated, while at the same time, he also means another illocution with different propositional content. The problem of indirect speech-acts

is in discovering how a speaker could express more than what he says, and how a listener could be able to correctly interpret a statement which means something beyond what is said. The indirect means of expressing one's own goals is employed, for example, as a strategy for being polite, yet when doing so, a speaker assumes that the listener has sufficient linguistic competence and the broader encyclopaedic knowledge of the surrounding world required to correctly interpret the message. (Searle 1986: 151–169.)

In the source material, it is self-evident that performers expect the executed ritual and lament performance to result in the disappearance of the addressed agents which are harmful to human beings. However, these goals are not given direct verbal expression in laments. No one orders the bedbugs or thistles to disappear. No one commands or requests them to leave the field or the house. They are not threatened with death, nor referred to by derogatory names. Quite the contrary: bedbugs are handled with great care and consideration, accompanied by expressions of sorrow at the coming separation from them, as well as expressions of concern over their future destiny. Correspondingly, lament-incantations for insects and weeds can therefore be described as strategies employing the indirect expression of their goals. As a strategy, the preference of the indirect speech-act to the direct speech-act can be attributed first and foremost to the capacity of actions (including the typology of speech-act) as well as objects to defend the performers from those who came from the otherworld and are able to cause harm, not only in the present, but also in the future. Thus, attempts to avoid employing names that are taboo (mentioned above) and referring to the threatening objects of these laments through positive epithets, described by A. K. Mikušev (1994: 12) as "formulas pleading for forgiveness and offering farewells," can be associated with an intention to affect the bearer of the name, in order to incline him to be affable and to obtain his good will, pleasing him and thereby protecting the addressers, through their representative performer, from revenge – from the new appearance of the harmful things.

In Karelian laments, a Russian lexicon is used in the generation of circumlocutions – i.e. indirect or metaphorical expressions (Stepanova 2003: 150–165). A Russian lexicon is also encountered in Komi lament-incantation texts. In the last Komi example quoted above (NA KNC F.1. Op. 11. D. 206), the lamenters employ the expression *mödam ukerenitny* (мӧдам укеренитны) ['we will destroy'], in which the second verb is an assimilation of the Russian verb *iskorenit'* (искоренить) ['to remove by the roots; to destroy totally'] into Komi language and phonetics. Bearing in mind the principles on which circumlocutions are used in Karelian laments, it is possible to hypothesize that Komi lamenters intentionally employed Russian expressions so that the true goal of destroying the addressee would be obscured behind a circumlocution.

Motifs commenting on ritual actions express that the "I" or "we" are doing something or about to do something without describing or stating these things in the way they would be expressed in everyday speech. If such action is performed without words, the action is not fully realized and it is as though the action is not performed or never took place at all. Ulla

Piela (2005: 13) has analysed Finno-Karelian incantations, in which the vernacular ritual specialist called a *tietäjä* employs the "I" "to describe his own actions, feelings and intentions", proposing that "incantations are, in the context of the rite, *healing narratives*." A Komi lamenter may follow her actions with a corresponding verbal description, predict her actions with a corresponding verbal description, or even verbally express actions which are perhaps not performed in the banishing ritual at all. In this way, a lamenter creates narratives which forever expel objects of danger to the place from whence they came into the human world: therefore, in the context of the rite, these laments can be considered *banishing narratives*. With the help of these narratives, a performer reshapes reality to conform to the world of her words, realizing it in a form where the representatives of the otherworld are no longer present.

Making any type of illocutionary speech-act is related to rule-governed forms of behaviour (Searle 1986: 152) – i.e. speech-acts are regulated by convention. The conventionality of folklore texts is regulated by the tradition of this or that culture. The encyclopaedic knowledge about the world, which is necessary for both the addressee and the speaker to understand indirect speech-acts in a banishment ritual, is the tradition. The "intertextual library" emphasized by Anna-Leena and Jukka Siikala (Siikala & Siikala 2005: 57) can be approached in the Komi tradition as including banishment rituals with all possible mythic conceptions about the otherworld and its representatives, as well as the strategies for expelling them. The tradition – this knowledge of the surrounding world – required performers to use precisely this genre as appropriate to the situation. The efficacy of the genre of laments was established through its use in funeral rituals in which the deceased was sent into the otherworld, pacified and comforted in order to insure that he or she would remain there. This proved a very appropriate and functional strategy for comforting, pacifying and removing other sources of danger from the world of the living, and a strategy which helped to avoid any negative repercussions from those who were sent to the otherworld, either at the time of banishment or in the future.

Translated by Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 The Komi Republic (in the Russian Federation) is situated to the west of the Ural Mountains, in the northeastern region of the East European Plain. The Komi people live in the territory of the Komi Republic as well as outside of it. According to the latest census in Russia from 2010, there were 228,235 Komis. Alongside Udmurt, the Komi language belongs to the Permian branch of the Finno-Ugric language family.

2 This movement belongs to a pattern of inverted actions as contrasted with customary patterns of action involving movements of the hand (such as giving, pouring, etc.). It becomes "inverted" when – contrary to customary movement – the act or gesture is accomplished by rotating the hand away from the body, so

that the back of the hand turns down and the movement carries over the upturned palm. – *Editors' note.*

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FA SyktGU RF = Фольклорный архив Сыктывкарского государственного университета. Рукописный фонд (Folklore Archive of the Syktyvkar State University. Manuscript Archive).

NA KNC = Научный архив Коми научного центра Уральского объединения Российской Академии Наук (Scientific Archive of the Komi Research Centre of Ural Division of Russian Academy of Science).

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Irina Il'ina and Oleg Uljašev

Gender and Myth in Traditional Komi-Zyrjan Culture*

Man and woman have been opposites since the beginning of time. This opposition is reflected in mythology, folklore, rituals and everyday life. When the Komi ethnographer V. P. Nalimov (1903: 79, 84–85) commented on the Komi people's attitudes toward their own myths, he mentioned that men and women perceive the images of the central mythological beings *Jen* and *Omöl* in different ways. Women interpreted Omöl unambiguously as an unclean creature, hostile to people. In contrast, he was first and foremost Jen's partner and less successful rival from the perspective of men. The differences in how these images are perceived can be explained by the fact that men and women understand them through mythological texts of different levels. More or less large-scale narratives on cosmogonic, anthropogonic and aetiological subjects were and remain to the present day primarily told among men in Komi culture. Women, on the other hand, are more attracted to the lower mythology, such as belief legends (Russian *byličkі* and *byvaľščina*), which only rarely refer to narratives about the creation of the world.

The Creation of the First Human Beings

There is a clear coexistence of women's and men's cultures within Komi culture, as is apparent, for example, in the mythological narratives about the creation of human beings. There are numerous variants of the Komi myth of the creation of the first human beings (*Ural'skaja mifologija* 1998: 43, 240–241, 252). As our article concerns the mutual relationships between genders, we can differentiate these myths according to the following types:

1. Myths which do not mention the gender of the first human being
2. Myths in which the first man and first woman are created at the same time

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3. Myths in which the man is created first
4. Myths in which the woman is created first.

Although some Komi-Zyrjans describe how the first human beings were born from trees and grass (*puis'-turunis'*), narratives about the spontaneous appearance of human beings are more common among Komi-Permjaks. Some versions of the Permjak myth describe how both a human being and animals appeared in the forest which had grown from the rubbish and dust carried by the wind on the primal waters. This small human being first lived in a tree because the earth was a quagmire. According to other versions, human beings originated from the eggs of a fish or a frog that had remained on the first dry land when the earth was created. In a third version of the Permjak myth, a Čud cut off his head with a sickle, and various animals appeared from his body; the last to appear was the first human being. (*Ural'skaja mifologija* 1998: 241.)

According to the most of the well-known Komi-Zyrjan myths, the demiurge Jen first created a man and then created a woman to be his "companion" (Fokos-Fucs 1951: 150). Omöl is the demiurge who competes with Jen. In a myth told in Verxnjaja Vyčegda, Omöl created a woman, saying, "It would be too easy for a man to live without a woman: he would not use foul language and would not sink into sin." Jen then corrected this situation by uniting man and woman with love: "Let them quarrel and fight during the day, but let them have a good time at night." (PMA.) In some myths, Omöl defiles his brother's creation: he covers the first human being with saliva and turns him inside out, and then uses saliva to finish the first woman, whom Jen had not yet completed; according to another variant of this myth, Omöl only spoiled the first woman.

Among the Komi, the defiling of woman is connected with the origin of *pež*, a kind of substance or quality. Christian ideas about woman's primordial sinfulness have led to the interpretation of *pež* in literature as filth, dirtiness or sinfulness. In one text, the first woman was fashioned by Omöl and given life by Jen. She then gave birth to twelve daughters, but Omöl incited her to kill them. When Jen heard about this, he cursed her: "You will swallow your children and the earth will no longer bear your weight". The first woman became Death and her twelve daughters became illnesses. Jen then created a second wife for the first man from the man's rib. (Doronin 1947: 105–111.) The narrative about the origin of death is only one part of a Komi mythological cycle which consists of six independently circulated narratives, and it is clearly an adaptation of a Christian apocryphal narrative. However, it is interesting that death is associated with the image of the first woman in some Komi myths.

In Permjak myths, the first woman has a higher status. According to Permjak legends, people originated from the coupling of *Pera* and *Zarań*. *Pera* was a mighty hero, the earthly son of the taiga forest called *Parma*, and *Zarań* was the celestial daughter of the Sun who came to the Earth on the rainbow. According to a version collected in Vym' about two demiurge-frogs, Omöl fell from a hummock, hurt his teeth, and animals were created from the blood which fell from a broken tooth. The most beautiful of

these animals becomes a woman, Omöl's wife, whom Jen later kidnapped (Sidorov 1972, 1991: 3–4). In these narratives, the status of the image of the first woman is in fact more divine than human, because she is variously called the Daughter of the Sun, wife of god, or the mother of the first human beings, the Great Mother of the human race.

The image of a creator-goddess, who is equal to Jen and Omöl (or *Kul'*), is not preserved in present-day Komi mythology. However, the existence of a female goddess among Permian cultures is reflected in images of the Permian animal style. The central figure in some of these representations is a woman with a solar symbol on her forehead or above her head; she is surrounded by animals while rain water trickles down her arms and legs, transforming into plants (cf. V. Survo, this volume). The goddess had a high mythological status, binding together the earth below and the heavens above. She was directly associated with solar, life-giving power, as well as water and the fertility of the earth. The image on her chest, representing a human form, gives reason to believe that she was also responsible for the reproduction of the human race. (Konakov 1996: 60.) Komi women have traditionally honoured and continue to honour the Mother of God, *Paraskeva-Pjatńča* and *Varvara*. Paraskeva-Pjatńča is the female protector in women's works and Varvara is the healer. These figures are mainly connected with a woman's primary function – reproduction. The replacement of pagan gods with borrowed Christian figures is characteristic of mythological thinking, and we may therefore suppose that the female patron saints of women have one or more vernacular antecedents in the past.

Narratives about a baby being born from its mother's armpit are common among all Komi groups. These narratives are often used to explain the appearance of a newborn baby to children, which is interesting in connection with beliefs about the goddess and the donor of life. Komi Old Believers believe that all women gave birth to children in this way, until the Virgin Mary forbade it after giving birth to Jesus Christ from her own armpit. Parallels to this narrative are found in the traditional beliefs of the Altai cultures, such as the Evenki and Altai-Turks, and these parallels are connected with gods of different levels who are givers of life.

Women and the Power of Productive Forces

Woman is clearly connected with life and death in traditional rituals. In childbirth, a woman "brings" (*vajö*) a new life into the earthly world with the help of a midwife, and a woman lamenter conducts an extinguished life back to the otherworld. According to traditional beliefs, every woman must be a midwife (*gögin'*), if only once in her life, otherwise she will not go to the otherworld, or in the otherworld she will serve as a midwife to dogs. A midwife, like the god-mother (*vežan'*), was more honoured than the parents of a baby. There was a strong disapproval not just of any insignificant insult, but of any disagreement at all with the midwife in daily life.

In traditional society, the status of a woman was defined above all by her primary destiny: the production of offspring. Evidence of this is found

in rituals associated with reaching physical maturity. When a girl received her first menstruation, her mother combs her hair in the evening, and while plaiting it into a braid, she wishes for her daughter to mature into a healthy woman who will give birth to healthy and desirable children, and also that her breasts will be filled with milk like a flooding river. Following this, the mother sticks the comb into her daughter's hair and leaves it there. (Slepčina 1998.) It was believed that from this moment on into a woman's old age, she bears the variety of natural magical power or substance called *pež,* which in traditional beliefs is often connected with sexual relationships and childbirth.

In everyday speech, the Komi word *pež* means all kinds of filth, dirt or pus. However, the scope of the term's meaning is significantly broader. According to the narratives that are known, the earth was flooded with *pež* as a result of Omöl's intrigues. As a consequence, the earth became infertile and both animals and people became ill. One woman then decided to take the *pež* onto herself, and she would have drowned in that substance if other women, with a sense of solidarity, had not shared it out among themselves. Since that time, every woman has been a carrier of *pež*. The Christian concept of original sin augmented this myth, leading people to begin to think of *pež* in terms of sin or sinfulness. It is interesting that even in the present day, some Komis still believe that the *pež gagjas* ['dirty creatures'] created by Omöl (e.g. mosquitoes, midges, beetles, worms and lizards, as well as mice) are born spontaneously: mice appear out of old clothes and rotten hay; lizards (dialectal *sís' pu gag* ['a creature of rotten wood']) from twigs of rotten wood; a horsehair snake or horsehair worm (*vöv śi gag* ['a horsehair']) from horse-tails dipped in water (PMA). The term *pež* is thus used above all in connection with powerful productive natural forces, and women are an instrument and conduit for channelling *pež* into the human world.

Pež can be transferred to people from objects, natural forces, animals or other people. A man who is infected with *pež* becomes dependent on a woman; he looses both his potency and also his success in hunting because wild animals avoid him. Children infected with *pež* become ill. Because of these hazards, once a woman reached sexual maturity, her behaviour was strictly regulated in daily life. She was not permitted to wash and dry her own undergarments with those of children. She was not permitted to step over or touch men's things (clothing, tools, instruments for hunting and fishing, etc.). She was also obliged to observe prohibitions concerning sexual relationships with certain peoples. A man was not allowed to pass from hand to hand (i.e. from his own hand to someone else's) anything that had been dropped by a woman. After sexual intercourse, he was forbidden to begin a relationship with another woman, or even to step over her. This was in order to avoid a transfer of *pež*. Typically, Komi of the Sysola region believed that a girl could become pregnant if a man stepped over her after having intercourse with another woman. (Nalimov 1991.) It was absolutely necessary to carry out purification rites after sexual intercourse, childbirth, and so forth. After sexual intercourse, a man was obliged to purify himself in a sauna before he went hunting or fishing. After childbirth, the midwife was given the cloth or towel as a present by the parents. The midwife had to wipe her hands on this towel, and it was believed that if a midwife did not

receive this present, she would stand between two poles with wet hands in the otherworld, begging for a towel from passing souls.

Although *pež* was considered harmful and dangerous in everyday life, the effect of this magic force was considered inevitable, and even necessary in certain situations.[1] Komi women, who had saved the world from *pež* in mythical times, were generally believed to have special merits. On the one hand, they were completely subject to the man of the house (whether father, husband or brother), but on the other, they had the right to offer their opinion when a problem was being solved. During the absence of the man of the house, they were allowed to make all decisions regarding the household. They had a higher social status than priests and officials and they were not obliged to bow to those people.

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The special status of a woman in the community was defined by the fact that, as a carrier of the primordial force of fertility, she was open to the otherworld until her old age. She was especially open to the otherworld during menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth. There were many prohibitions and rules for pregnant women related to this belief. A future mother and child were considered extremely vulnerable to the evil eye, "spoiling", and thus she submitted to rules that protected them from harmful forces. First, the pregnancy would be concealed for as long as possible. It was forbidden for a pregnant woman to draw attention to herself; she had to avoid inciting envy. She was obliged to avoid any encounters or conflicts with other people who were considered sorcerers. She was forbidden to participate in funeral rites and especially to look on the deceased or to cut her hair. Prior to giving birth, the pregnant woman was not allowed to take anything from other people. This was to avoid "spoiling". She was also not allowed to give anything to others in order to avoid giving away good fortune (*šud*) with the object. At the same time, the people around her were not to refuse giving her anything – especially food. It was believed that unclean forces could steal a foetus "from under the ribs" and therefore it was necessary for a pregnant woman to carry an amulet. For example, she might wear a belt made of bast, a piece of fishing net or her husband's belt tied around her bare body or around her undershirt; she might wear a needle without an eye, pins, and so forth. A pregnant woman was simultaneously also dangerous to the people around her. While pregnant, she was not allowed, for example, to breast-feed, to look after children or to touch things belonging to men. She was also not allowed to be present when a stove was erected. Stoves were associated with a woman's womb. It was consequently believed that if a pregnant woman had been present while a stove was being built, then the stove could crack or collapse when she gave birth. (PMA.) The dual status of a pregnant woman, a woman in childbirth, and a newborn child, is attributable to the belief that they were especially close to the world of the ancestors. This dual status could be overcome with the help of different purification rites, both during and after childbirth.

Fates of Men, Fates of Women

The difference between a man's fate and a woman's fate is emphasized through the fact that these are referred to with different vernacular terms. The word *morttuj* [literally 'the human path'] means male abilities, skills and character. The word *an'tuj* [literally 'the female path'] means female abilities, skills and character. The differences between these two "paths" are defined before a person's birth and connected with the heavenly bodies. According to popular beliefs, a future child's gender is determined by the heavenly body under the influence of which fertilization occurs. Girls are conceived after sunset when the moon is shining. This is because the moon loves them and gives them to mothers. Boys are conceived in the morning twilight, precursor of the sun. (Nalimov 1908: 126.) The sex of the first child was already anticipated during the wedding rite. When a bride's hair was braided, the completion of the right plait before the left meant that the first child would be a boy, whereas the completion of the left before the right meant the first child would be a girl. Similarly, if a pregnant woman first sees a frog, it was an omen that she will give birth to a boy, whereas seeing a lizard first, the future child will be a girl. People also tried to anticipate the sex of a future child according to the shape of the mother's abdomen: a rounded abdomen indicated a girl, whereas the more pointed abdomen indicated a boy.

A man's fate was traditionally connected with his success in hunting and with his ability to use an axe and knife. A real Komi man is characterized

Photo 1. The horse is an animal of men. Village of Čuprovo, Muftjuga, Udorskij District. Photo by P. Limerov.

Photo 2. The cow is an animal of women. Village of Anyb. Photo by L. Lobanova.

by the expression *ćerapurta mort* ['a man with axe and knife']. A woman's fate was defined by her ability to bake, spin, and to take care of both family members and domestic animals. The division of men's and women's duties is presented in several myths. Jen destined man to become a hunter: he was obliged to bring home game and to take care of his horse and dog. Tending the hearth, children, cows and the cat became woman's lot. Myths tell how Jen gave a dog to man as his companion in hunting, and a cat to woman to protect foodstuffs from rodents. According to Komi beliefs, a woman who has slapped her cat and the man who has beaten or starved his horse are inevitably punished in the otherworld. There is also a myth that tells how, in mythic times, men milked cows with one hand directly into the palm of the other. Once the cow disappeared and the men could not find it. A woman of the house met the protector of cows in the forest, and this mythic woman taught her the rules for caring for the cow. (*Ural'skaja mifologija* 1998: 244.)

Images of Beauty

Children were directed symbolically into different spheres of activity almost from the moment of birth: the umbilical cord of a girl was cut on a spindle or winding frame, whereas a boy's umbilical cord was cut on the butt of a weapon or on an axe. A traditional upbringing developed and established particular skills which were necessary in a woman's role as housewife, wife and mother, or a man's role as man of the house, husband and father. Ideas about manliness and womanliness were formed according to stereotypical popular conceptions of a man's and a woman's beauty.

Folkloric images of beauty are connected metaphorically with images of the sun, the moon and stars. These present epithets that characterize human beauty in general as well as conceptions that belong exclusively to either masculine or feminine images. In ritual wedding laments, a woman's beauty is connected with the sun, singing birds, flowers, transparency and tenderness, as in the following example:

jugyd šondiöj da menam	My dear, bright sun,
ćvetnöj ćveť itömöj.	colourful blossoming one.
petyrviǫ̈ pyröm dyrśa-j	Blossoming one of green grass
vež turin daj ćvetöj...	of the fast of Saint Peter...
troića dyrśa de menam,	Blossoming one of the birch's little leaves,
koröś kor ćvetöj...	of my Whitsundays...
petir lun dyrśa da menam	My bloom of ripened strawberries
kiśmöm oz tuś ćvetöj...	of Saint Peter's Day...
prokopej dyrśa menam dej	My bloom of ripened cloudberry
kiśmöm myrpom ćvetöj...	of Prokopij's Day...
il'l'a lun dyrśa da menam	my blossoming one of wild angelica
ombra ćvetöj...	of Saint Elijah's Day...
šör spas dyrśa da menam	My blooming one of ripened bilberry
kiśmöm ćöd tuś ćvetöj...	of Second *Spas*[2]...
ivan posnöj dyrśa da,	blooming one of ripened cowberry,
kiśmöm puv tuś ćvetöj	of Saint John's feast.
mamöj, matuškaöj,	Mother, dear mama,
kiśmöm oz tuśös moz	like a ripened strawberry
teöj kiśmödin daj,	you have ripened me,
söömödin, bydtin daj,	matured, grown me,
zarńi bord ulad.	under your golden wing.
(Osipov 1986: 49.)	
utka, veśkön, miöj völim,	We were of wild ducks,
mića ćukörnanym.	a beautiful flock.
śuvćöž vöd miöj völim,	We were of divers,
mića daj poztyrnanym.	a beautiful little family.

A man's beauty is connected with images of natural forces, such as lightning, a cloud or wind, and with birds of prey such as a kite, hawk or raven. These are images that manifest force and finesse, alacrity and aggression.

kymörys vois daj menö kurćavhy pondis,
stav kynöm pyćkösö menam vörźis
(Plesovskij 1968: 199)

A cloud came and started to bite me,
all my insides moved from their places

At the same time, the image of a man in wedding laments is not restricted to the qualities of a groom because it is completed with the traditional metaphor *lun göra* ['midday mountain']. This metaphor is associated with the father of the bride and symbolizes strength, goodness, stability and reliability.

When the beauty of a woman is described in folktales, a clear parallel is drawn between beauty, light and transparency. A beautiful woman in a folktale is:

> like a hot candle whose beauty shines, who is so beautiful that her bones can be seen through her body, through her bones, the marrow, and through that, everything that is done in the free world.
> It is difficult to take your eyes off of her – her beauty shines like the sun.

A man's beauty is described more simply:

> The width of his shoulders is one *aršin* (71 cm) and his chest is half an *arshin*.
> The width of his back is a *sažen*' (2.13 meters)
> His shoulders are the width of a *sažen*'.

In everyday life, beauty is understood more pragmatically. It is connected above all with the health of the body. In a man's case, indicators are a solid build, height and blond hair – *jon, yӏӏyd, jeӏӏyd, mića* ['strong, big, white, beautiful']. Red cheeks and whiteness are considered criterions of a woman's beauty, which the Komi unite in an expression like *jeӏӏyd vir-jaj* ['white

Photo 3.A Komi hunter from the Ižma region, village of Bakur. Photo by A. Arteev.

body'; literally 'white blood-meat']. This expression is equivalent to the Russian expression *krov' s molokom* ['blood with milk'].

It is no coincidence that people have always turned to methods for strengthening their health as a means to increase their attractiveness when they wish to get the attention of the opposite sex. Women in particular knew a great many recipes for this. Following the proverb "A woman must not drink plain water", women used infusions and decoctions from different herbs in order to preserve their beauty and health. Cosmetics were also well-known: washing the skin with sour milk or dew gathered from blossoming rye provided wonderful freshness and whiteness to the skin. Wild strawberry juice or thick soured milk was used to remove freckles. Pieces of beetroot were used as rouge. In order to make the hair thick and silky, it was washed and rinsed with extract from the chaga mushroom (*fungus betulinus* or "cinder conk"), nettles, leaves of birch or willow trees, camomile flowers and burdock root. A man's sexual ability was an especially appreciated quality. Men were therefore told to eat more fish – especially fresh fish or fish salted according to the so-called "Pećoran way". They were also told to eat cloudberries. Although at first sight, these means were very practical, they were very often endowed with magical characteristics. For example, a whisk made from birch twigs collected on Midsummer's Eve obtained a splendid ability to clean away all of the filth during a sauna and to provide health until to the following summer. The following incantation was pronounced while beating a person with this whisk in the sauna:

korös' korjys moz med ćvet'itny	May you flourish like a small leaf of the whisk.
jedӀyd med tenad jajyd loö.	May your body become white.
jugyd med tenad viryd loö.	May your blood become light.
(Mikušev et al. 1971: 46)	

Girls and women, who believed in the magic power of herbs, went to the meadows on the far side of a river on the night of Midsummer's Eve and rolled naked in the dewy grass, reciting, *siźimdas siźim turunys' lysva – siźimdas siźim vis'öm vošas* ['Dew of the seventy-seven herbs – seventy-seven illnesses disappear'].

Relationships, Fortune-Telling and Games

Innate or acquired beauty – so different for the two genders – attracts each to the other. The natural difference between a man and a woman presupposes the creation of a relationship in which he and she complement one another and are continued through their children. The special significance of marriage for women is evinced in the ritual activity that surrounded reaching physical maturity. From that moment, a dowry began to be prepared for the girl's anticipated husband, and the theme of marriage became more prominent in girl's fortune-telling. The Christmas season (especially on Christmas Eve), the eve of Saint Vasilij's Day (January 1st), the eve of the Epiphany and also Midsummer's Eve were significant times for

fortune-telling. These were times when girls turned to supernatural forces in order to predict with whom they were fated to spend their lives. It was possible to create a connection with the otherworld at a crossroads, at a hole in the ice or a well, in a sauna, drying barn, or abandoned house, at the entry to a cellar or on the bench in front of the stove. These were all considered places where it was possible to enter the world of spirits. With the help of a mirror, gold ring, water, tracks or footprints in ashes or snow, unspun wool, combs and other things, fortune-tellers tried to find out as much information as possible about a future husband. For example, they would try to discover his name, age, character, the colour of his hair, his wealth and residence, as well as the character of a future mother-in-law, and so on. The future bridegroom could also appear in a prophetic dream. (Konakov 1993.)

Among the objects of many games and entertainments that were very popular among young people was finding a future spouse through partnering in the game itself. During various games at recreational gatherings for youths, the participants divided into pairs. The purpose of this was to find a partner whom you found attractive and who was also attracted to you. Thus, special gatherings were organized for children of 7–12 years in age on Michealmas in Vym' and Udora. At these gatherings, the children sang in pairs, and during the singing, a boy took a girl by the arm and they went to the middle of the room where they bowed to those present. After this they had to remember one another for the whole year. (Starcev Ф. 170, оп. 1, д. 4, л. 43). Similarly, on the eve of St. Vasilij's Day, older pairs chose one another (Dukart 1978: 91–104). The choice of the pair continued in different ways both for teenagers and those who were older. Usually girls and boys separated into groups in different corners of a house. Members of one group (girls in Sysola, boys in the Vyćegda villages) would chose a their beloved from the other group beforehand and then members of that other group tried to guess who had chosen them. Sometimes the boy and girl sat back to back and after a song had been sung they had to turn around: if they turned in the same direction, they had to kiss one another. At the end of the game, the girl usually sat on the lap of the boy. Particularly elucidatory is a Christmas game called *zdövöl'*, in which the leader of the game led a girl to each boy, asking, "Are you pleased?" and if the answer was yes, he seated the girl on the boy's lap. The couples began to talk, embrace and kiss each other, sometimes changing their places. The final, and most interesting part of the game took place after the lights had been blown out. These games and entertainments had a particular psychological impact on both the loving couples and on popular opinion. They reinforced relationships between young people and determined their common future.

Komi culture and living conditions were characterized by long separations, such as long trips for hunting or work. It was considered important to maintain contacts with relatives, friends, and – of course – between lovers. Some games promoted faithfulness, such as *pömnitćöm* ['remembering']. This was practiced both in families and among young people. In this game, two people would take the collarbone (i.e. wishbone) of a wood grouse, black grouse, duck, hare or partridge, and holding it by its ends, they would pull it apart. Each would tuck the piece he or she

received behind his or her left ear. After that, one of the partners would try to catch the other "napping" by passing him or her that part of the bone or some other object with the word "remember". If the partner forgot to say "I remember", he or she had to pay according to an agreement. Children had to give nuts or sweets, adults a bottle of vodka. A boy and a girl would be "condemned" to spend a year of courting or a year of kisses. (Starcev 1929: 48.)

Easter entertainments on the swing presented many opportunities for boys and girls to develop emotional relationships. Young people usually swung in pairs. If the length of the seat allowed it, there could be as many as ten people on one swing. The feeling of flight coupled with delight and a touch of fear, trust in a partner and openness – and not just emotional openness – all give rise to possibilities of intimacy which would be restricted in everyday life. In the Priluz'e District, girls sat down on the swing and lifted the hems of their sarafans while boys stood on each end of the swing and kept it in motion. After getting off the swing, the girls had to repay the boys for this service with a kiss. Sometimes the swing was put near a haystack into which boys and girls jumped together. In the Ust'-Vym' District, a boy and girl who swung together, were often attracted to one another. The boy rocked the swing and the girl held or embraced him, while others made ribald jokes about them. In the Otla village of this district, when girls in new sarafans were whirling on a merry-go-round, youths would throw raw eggs at them. Then the girls would go to a meadow and roll in the fresh grass in order to clean their dresses. In Udora, boys accompanied the girls' swinging with the shout: *Patšukys tydalö!* ['A vulva is in sight!']. Ižma-Komi pairs were supposed to kiss when the swing crested in the air. The action of creating the world was symbolically re-enacted in swinging events through the connection between Heaven and Earth, and the whole atmosphere of these events had an emphatically erotic tone. (Nesanelis 1994: 23–28.)

Courtship, Love and Marriage

Courting was a natural extension of recreational entertainments. Games that included an erotic component led to pre-marital intimacy, although they did not always lead to a wedding. Naturally, the virgin status of a bride was held very high. As a strategy to emphasize the purity of a daughter who was already an adult, many a mother enjoys talking about how her daughter supposedly continued to hold the naïve belief that babies are miraculously born from the armpit even after getting married. It is still possible to hear different variants of good-natured and yet rather coarse stories of this kind from older women even today:

> My daughter had already finished her degree in pedagogy in town. She got married, and got pregnant. She's standing in front of a mirror, looking at her belly and wondering: 'I don't understand how the baby can come out from my armpit.' And I say to her: 'You're silly, silly. However it got in, that's the way it's coming out.' (PMA.)

Photo 4. A Komi beauty from the Ižma region. Photo by A. Arteev.

Traditional wedding rituals lasted for several days, and when the groom came to visit his mother-in-law for the first time, there was a special rite in which he could indicate whether or not his bride had been a virgin. When the groom was served pancakes, he could take a pancake from the top of the pile and bite a piece off of the edge or out of the middle and then hang it in the sacred corner of the house if his bride had not been a virgin. However, in most cases, people took a very negative attitude to the rare instances of a groom publicly dishonouring his wife. Even extra-marital children were not actually a hindrance to a marriage.[3] One researcher of the Komi has made an interesting observation regarding Zyrjan women: a Zyrjan girl has no prejudices concerning love, and many of these girls live unmarried without harming their careers. According to him, a Zyrjan girl chooses one man and lives with him. On the other hand, a Zyrjan's wife does not deceive her husband; she will not break off the marriage: the land of the Zyrjans is a land of faithful wives.

The establishment and maintenance of a family was considered essential for every normal human being, and in order to guarantee the establishment of a family, many resorted to love magic:

> When all of the family members had gone to church, girls took pies that they had baked in secret and placed them on the table, inviting an intended fiancé for a meal. Two chairs were side by side at the table. The girl making the prediction sat in one of them, while the intended fiancé should sit in the other. If the intended fiancé came and, after looking at him for long enough, the girl says, 'Go away! It is enough!' tearing at his clothes so that a piece of cloth remains in her hands, then it was believed that a wedding would surely take place. (Zavarin 1870: 71.)

It was possible to make someone fall in love or to make someone stop loving someone else with the help of magical strategies employing bodily substances such as nails, blood or hair, or using excreta such as sweat, urine or saliva. Pieces from a person's clothes, such as threads, fabric or insoles could also be used, as could footprints, a shadow, a person's name, a special doll, and so forth. (Sidorov 1928: 47, 49, Starcev 1929: 47–48.)

Making love potions was common among women. A woman might add drops of her own blood to wine offered to her beloved, or steep in tea those leaves of the birch whisks that stuck to her skin in the sauna. Men also made magical presents. A crafty suitor could bring sweets to offer a beloved girl, after holding one of the candies in his mouth and then rewrapping it in the original paper. (Starcev 1929: 48.) Sorcerers often influenced a person indirectly, using food and drink. An Udora sorcerer recited spells over the vodka and sour cream which wives served their husbands in order to increase the man's passion for them. A sorcerer from Gainy, hoping to make a young man fall in love, cooked a piece of birch bark forty times, with the incantation: "As this birch bark withers, may you, NN, also get dry and wither." He then offered the drink to the man.[4]

Women tried to guarantee the faithfulness of a beloved man by secretly sewing their own hair into his clothes. A hair could also be wound under the first button of his coat. Every track or mark left by a certain person, the parts of his body and also his clothes, were all believed to be connected to him by invisible threads. These conceptions guided the actions of girls as they attempted to govern young men's relationships to them. A girl could take a lump of earth from his footprint and put it under her foot. If the beloved man then stepped on the lump and trod it to dust when he came to see her, it meant that he loved her. (Starcev 1929: 48.)

Some magic actions were based on omens connected with the direct or indirect (through objects) contact of persons representing the opposite sex. It was believed that when a man and woman touch each other with bare parts of their bodies, or when they use objects in common, they can transfer *pež* – which is associated with sexual relationships in many respects. Belief in many omens has persisted into the present day, such as the belief that that if a boy and girl dry themselves with a common towel, drink from the same cup, or one of them sits down in the place where the other has sat, they will certainly get married. Young people would then actively create these kinds of situations, transforming an omen into a magical action.

The Komi believe that a name is bound to its bearer by a firm magic connection. One indication of this is found in the terms *nim vi0ys*' ['name

guard'] or *nimkyv viǫys'* ['name-word guard'], which are used to denote a sorcerer. The term for a charm or incantation, *nim-kyv* [literally 'name-word'], indicates that the sorcerer knows the particular name of a concrete person as well as the name of a mythic being. When attempting to stimulate a person's love by magical means, it is essential to use a person's name in the text of the charm, although it can also be used in other magic measures. Thus, among the Komi-Zyrjans and the Komi-Permjaks, if someone wants to stimulate a certain person's love, he or she should shout the name of that person into the chimney before sunrise. Ten or fifteen years ago in Upper Vyčegda, sunbathing teenagers would still put willow leaves on their chest so that it formed the name of a beloved girl: sometimes the name would remain there as long as the skin was suntanned.

The principle "like causes like" is commonly used in the love magic. When someone wanted a boy and a girl to get married or to reconcile a husband and wife, two dolls, symbolizing a man and a woman respectively, were modelled from the soft crumb of a loaf of bread. These were then stuck together and put in the oven, saying the following words:

Kyǫ akańjasys öta-möd doras kośmöny,	As these dolls dry to one another,
siǫ žö (ńimjas) kośmöj	may you NN dry together
ćuktytöm vylö.	in order not to separate.

A spouse's attraction to another woman could also be overcome with similar measures, returning him to the bosom of the family. A daughter of a well-known sorcerer from Middle Pečora recalled:

> My father told me how to help my girl-friend who had been betrayed by her husband. On Saturday, when everyone heated their saunas, she took three stones from the hot sauna after sunset. She sent her friend home to sit there and not to leave, otherwise nothing would come of it. She found the husband with his lover, stood between them and, after scolding them, she compelled them to go in different directions. Then she threw two stones after them, saying:
>
> Kyǫ tajö izjasys ńekor ötlayn oz lony
> siǫ i tijanly ńekor ötlain ńe lony.
> Kyǫ tajö izjasys köǫalöni,
> siǫ zö med śölömjasnyd köǫalasni.
>
> Like these stones will never come together
> may you also never be together.
> Like these stones grow cold,
> may your hearts grow cold.
>
> She threw the third stone into the house of her friend, with the words:
>
> Kyǫ tajö izjys tatyś ńekytće oz voš,
> siǫ i te ńekor tajö kerkaśys on mun.

As this stone will not disappear to anywhere from here,
may you also not disappear to anywhere from this house.

After this, it was necessary for the pair not to see each other for three days. The friend's husband had just gone to Troitsk and he was never with his mistress again after that. (PMA.)

There were many magical means which helped make it possible to keep or desert someone. If someone wanted to stimulate the love of someone she liked, she had to catch a frog, tie its feet together and throw it on an anthill. Later, after collecting the pieces of bones which remained, she had to lie in wait for her beloved at sunset, and secretly stroke him lightly three times under his left shoulder-blade, whispering:

KyǪ śondi muśań ńekytćö oz mun,
kyǪ šondi vek mulań śibedćö,
siǪ i te me doryś ńekytćö on mun
vek me dorö loktan.
(PMA.)

Like the sun which never departs from the earth,
like the sun which always returns to the earth,
may you also not depart from me,
may you always return to me.

It was also possible to stick the collar-bone of a frog imperceptibly into the jacket pocket of the admired person, or into the lining of his cap when meeting him. There was also another method which was just as reliable. This required a special bone of a black cat that had been killed and cooked in a sauna pot on the Eve of the Epiphany. When the girl met her beloved, she then fastened her garment to the garment of her beloved with this bone. A dried bat and a fern were also love talismans. In the Upper Vyčegda region, a pike's tooth was stuck into the clothes of the husband who was cheating on his wife. As a pike's tooth was a reliable talisman against evil spirits and sorcerers, it was probably believed in this case to connect him with home and protect him from lust.

Turning to Sorcerers

It was said that anyone could use the simplest magic methods to cause or suppress the shivers of love. Even those who did not know anything about magic did not shun contacts with supernatural forces. However, practicing witchcraft was dangerous due to its consequences, and using magic could also result in a bad reputation. One author of this article was faced with a situation that was revealing in this respect during fieldwork in the Vym' River. The local girl who was assisting him in the collection of information was recognized in almost every village. Some people were very curious about her presence, others were suspicious, while some exhibited a scarcely veiled

malevolence. It turned out that in her youth, this girl's mother had broken up an engaged couple with the help of magic, quite literally on the eve of their wedding. This had won her a bad reputation which was then transferred to her children. In order to remain "pure" while separating a person from his or her partner – whether this was to gain a spouse for oneself, to prevent a marriage which was considered undesirable by the family, or simply for revenge – a person would turn to a well-known specialist in magic in the district called a *tödyś* ['sorcerer, healer']. In addition to the fairly well-known means, a *tödyś* also had his own special methods.

Turning to a sorcerer was also necessary in cases when damaging magic resulted in a man's impotence or in a woman's infertility. Healers who cured in the sauna were thought to be exceptionally skilful at returning male potency. The sorcerer and the patient would go into the sauna during the first dry heat. The patient would lie down on the highest bench while the healer made *izja va* ['stone water']. This was done by taking water that had been collected at dawn from three springs, nine times from each spring, and letting it pass through the stones of the sauna oven. After this, the sorcerer beat the patient with a whisk, spat between his legs, poured the water gathered in a birchbark basket over him, and drove the illness away with short incantations such as, *viśöm, pež, mun more möd pölö, Kurja Marja dorö* ['Illness, *pež*, go to the other shore of the sea to Kur'ja Mar'ja'] or *mun kyǫ ulö* ['go under the birch']. (Nalimov 1991: 11.) A sorcerer from the Upper Vyčegda region ordered a man who had been "spoiled" to dive three times in a deep part of a river or lake, after which his masculine power would return. The conception underlying these rituals can be explained through the mythological conceptions of the Komis. According to these conceptions, a sea, the roots of a birch, and a deep place in a river or sea are all connected with "the otherworld" or "the lower world", to which an illness is sent during the healing process and where it remains. For women suffering from infertility, folk healers made decoctions from the herb called *kaga vajan turun* ['baby-giver-herb']. Similarly, the acquisition of this herb was associated symbolically with turning to the forces of the otherworld: on Midsummer's Eve, sorceresses would dress in white clothes and cross over a river to a meadow in order to collect herbs with magical properties. It was considered essential that turning to magical methods for arousing or dampening love should be kept secret. The psychological impact of these methods was greater when a person recognized that he was the object of magical actions.

An interrelationship between magical experiences and love experiences is characteristic of many cultures. This is because they both extend the borders of human cognition, which not only means a comprehension of the apprehended object on a conscious level, but also a comprehension of the object of love on a physical and emotional level. A *tödyś*, according to the Komi, not only knows the secrets of the universe, but with the help of magic, he can also affect a human being's internal world. We have not touched on the psychological mechanism of magical practice and the personality of the *tödyś* in this article, because this issue is not limited to the fields of ethnographic and folklore research but extends into the spheres of other sciences. The well-known mathematician and philosopher V. V. Nalimov

addressed the subject of "altered states of consciousness" in his works, examining sex in conjunction with meditation and trance-states which separate the borders of the human perception of the world. Narrowing and expanding of the conceptions of time and space are also characteristic of dreams and folklore texts in which a human being, changing his personal conceptions of time and space, unveils the secrets of nature and creates new worlds, the "otherworld" of popular beliefs.

Conclusion

This article has only addressed a few aspects of traditional Komi culture that it is possible to examine through relationships to gender. In general, the concerns of men and women did not intersect because of the established division of labour and the special distribution of family duties: the man hunted or fished and the woman worked at home. The Komi man and woman have always been rather equal and independent because of traditions which developed through the special conditions of economic life and the ecological conditions of the taiga forest regions. Women were loyal to the man of the house, who might be her father, husband or brother. On the other hand, women also had the right to express their opinion when problems were being resolved, and to solve all economic questions when the man of the house was absent. They had a higher social status than both priests and officials, so they were not obliged to bow to them. The existence of two relatively independent cultural strata – a male stratum connected with hunting and fishing, and a female stratum connected with the family – show that there was no clear dominant masculine or feminine leitmotif that was universal for the whole society.

Translated by Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 For example, the Komis know a method for healing a child of "spoiling" or "fright": a woman wets her undershirt with water that has been filtered through the stones of a sauna oven and she wrings it out above the child's head. This method was called *gor pyr va*. After describing this method, a woman from the Nivšera village added disapprovingly, "But I consider this *pež*". Another interesting method within this system is the use of a man's underpants to beat a cow that cannot become pregnant.
2 *Spas* is a folk term for an Orthodox holiday.
3 V. A. Semenov connects the word *čurka* ['an illegitimate child'], which has acquired negative associations (cf. English "bastard"), with Slavic *čur* or *praščur* ['forefather'], as indicating a belief that a fatherless child originates from a forefather. (Semenov 1992: 99.)
4 Reported by O. I. Novožilova.

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Vera Survo

Mythologems of Embroideries

On Karelian Sources

The museums of Russia and Finland contain rich assemblages of embroidered textiles that were collected in Karelia. Researchers of folk culture have collected articles of clothing, head adornments and textiles for daily use (towels, table cloths, linens) since the middle of the 19th century. Above all, these objects had ritual significance. This study is based on my fieldwork carried out from 1986–2011 in the regions of Zaonež'e ['Beyond Onega'], Pudož and Kargopol', as well as on museum collections preserved in St. Petersburg, Petrozavodsk, local museums of Karelia, and also collections of Karelian artefacts in the National Museum of Finland as well as the Virkki Museum of Handicrafts in the Karelia House (Helsinki). Resources from my fieldwork consist of both information about the ritual use and presence of embroideries (in wedding, funeral and birth rituals, etc.), and also about identified examples of handiwork that have passed through generations of women as family relics or mementos of mothers, grandmothers and so forth, preserved into the present day. In addition, ritual uses of textiles are still maintained. On expeditions in 2002–2011 in the regions of Zaonež'e, Pudož and Kargopol', we observed that textiles were used as offerings in sacred places, but these were not handmade nor hand-embroidered textiles: they were store-bought.

Until the 1930s and 1940s, the tradition of embroidery was maintained for several centuries across diverse ethnic populations in the peasant culture of Northwest Russia. Most interestingly, it was maintained in populations belonging to the common Orthodox religion. These were Orthodox inhabitants of Karelia (Karelians, Vepsians, Russians) and the region around St. Petersburg / Leningrad (Ižorians, Votes, Russians). This study is concerned with the tradition of Karelia and mainly of Russian Karelia, especially those territories that were part of the Olonec Province of the Russian Empire until 1922. Viena Karelia, the Belomorsk region of the old Arxangelsk' Province is also considered. The populations of Viena and Olonec Karelia were primarily Finnic (Karelians and Vepsians). In Zaonež'e Karelia, also in the old Olonec Province, the majority of the population was Russian.

Karelia is a very special area of ethnocultural contact between (generally speaking) two ethnic worlds: Finnic and Slavic. This contact has been

ongoing since the Middle Ages, and its dynamics did not begin to wane until modern times. The Kargopol' region belonged to the Olonec Province for 120 years (1801–1922).[1] Many features of traditional culture however reveal that it belongs to Zaonež'e. Within the present study, sources from the Kargopol' region are used alongside materials from Zaonež'e and Pudož. This is primarily because the ancient elements of Finno-Ugric culture were very significant in these regions of the Russian North, and also because the region is characterized by extremely long and stable historical-cultural contacts between these populations. As a consequence, regionally specific features evolved in this area which can be traced in the persistence of decoration and use of textiles. In addition to ornaments in embroidery, the intimacy of contact and interaction between Karelians, Vepsians and Russians in these adjacent regions can also be observed in language, some folklore genres (lyric songs, folktales, folk dance, beliefs), dwellings, agricultural practices and tools, clothing and wedding rituals.

Since the end of the 19th century, many researchers have given attention to the ornamentation of embroideries as a reflection of archaic folklife, and as a visual symbol of traditional culture. The images on embroideries were "discovered" immediately after the rich treasure of folklore was found in this territory. The region has consequently become a special destination for pilgrimage by both Finnish and Russian researchers of traditional culture: representatives of each nation were searching Karelia for their own "archaic roots".

For Finnish researchers, Karelia was a region where kalevalaic songs were collected (particularly Viena and Olonec Karelia): Karelia was a virgin island of old Finnish culture, untouched by civilization. Ornamentation was of interest as part of the once-united Finnish culture (Schvindt 1895, 1913, Heikel 1910–1915). Another trend emerged later. U. T. Sirelius saw eastern (Persian and Arabic) influences in the ornamentation of Karelia and Ingria. According to Sirelius, these influences resulted in the great similarity of images in embroidered ornaments across Northwest Russia. (Sirelius 1925: 372–387.) Tyyni Vahter also devoted some articles to handicrafts of eastern Karelia, and to motifs of ornamentation in Karelian, Vepsian and Ingrian embroidery (Vahter 1938, 1944).

During the Second World War, research was conducted in the occupied territories of Russian Karelia in 1941–1944 by T. Vahter, H. Helminen, T.-K. Virkki, and others on traditional textile handicrafts (embroidering, weaving and knitting) among Karelians, Vepsians and Russians from Zaonež'e. The materials brought back from these occupied territories significantly expanded the collections of the National Museum of Finland and provided foundations for collections of other museums. In addition to academic research, scholars also published in newspapers and organized exhibitions of Karelian handicrafts in Finland. Among Olonec Karelians, scholars attempted to revive the tradition of embroidery, that had not yet been completely extinguished, by establishing handicraft workshops, from which the production was intended to be exported to Finnish fashion salons. (E.g. Vahter 1944, Virkki 1989, Lausala 1984, Helminen 2008.) This period was characterized by the search for "specifically Finnish features" in the

embroideries of Karelians and Vepsians. In some motifs of the Karelian textile ornamentation, for example, Vahter saw parallels with the art of medieval Finnish churches, with the Lutheran Church tradition. Thus, the search for pro-Finnic ornaments was changed into an ideologically more current construal of Finnish-Lutheran iconic symbols.

More than thirty years ago, Annikki Lukkarinen (1981) studied the role of embroidered towels and other textiles in rituals of Karelia (Viena, Olonec, Finnish Karelia). In her monograph, Lukkarinen discussed the ritual functions of towels in wedding rituals, in funeral and memorial rituals and in family ritual practices more generally. On the basis of collections in the National Museum of Finland, Lukkarinen offered an overview of motifs used in ornamentation and statistics concerning embroidery techniques according to region. In her later publications, she popularized the theme of ritual functions of Karelian towels. (Lukkarinen & Heikkilä-Palo 1995.)

In the following years, the interest in traditional Karelian embroidery was connected to the cultivation of folklorism in Finland, which became particularly popular in the 1960s–1980s. The period of the "Karelian Renaissance" was characterized by interest in traditional women's handicrafts, techniques for making them, as well as the production of patterns and instructions for embroidering. (E.g. Tsutsunen 1979: 5–15, Komulainen 1989, Heikkinen 2000.) Even today, narratives about Karelian embroidering traditions still continue as actualizations of the collective memory of Karelian refugees, and above all highlighting national and ethnic components is ongoing, as is apparent in the title of one of the most recent publications on Karelian towel embroideries: *Käspaikka muistiliina* ['The Towel of Memory'] (Säppi & Oino 2010).

Like the Finns, Russian researchers gave attention to Russian embroidery following the discovery of the rich trove of folklore – such as the heritage of *bylina* songs – in the territory of Russian Karelia (the eastern part of the Olonec province). Researchers and collectors considered embroidery from Karelia "the needlework of Olonec" and "embroidery of the archaic variety". They treated it as a reflection of ancient Slavic beliefs and emphasized Asian parallels in the ornamentation (e.g. Stasov 1872, Gorodcov 1926, Dinces 1946, 1947a, 1947b, Ambroz 1965). In subsequent years, Karelian embroidery was regarded as part of a common Russian art (e.g. Boguslavskaja 1972, 1982, Šangina 1975, 1979). Researchers delineated a special northwest area of Russian embroidery, inclusive of the distinct "school" of Karelian needlework, with plot-based anthropomorphic compositions. (Maslova 1978: 179.) The intimate correspondence between Karelian, Vepsian, Ižorian, and Votic embroidery on the one hand, and Russian traditions of that region on the other, was explained through the early arrival of the Finno-Ugric peoples into the sphere of Russian (Novgorodian) cultural influence beginning in the 9th century (Maslova 1978: 192). Other researchers saw the long history of cultural contact as the reason for such similarity in the ornamentation of Russian and Finno-Ugric peoples in northwestern areas. The ornamentation itself was thereby seen as forming through commonly practiced creative work. (Vagner 1974: 47, Šangina 1979: 19.)

In the 1960s, new trends emerged in researching ornamentation in Karelian embroideries as part of a common Russian art. For the first time in the history of research, emphasis was placed on the Finno-Ugric roots of images in ornamentation and on a direct continuity of these images from the iconographic traditions reflected on medieval metalwork pendants. Two-headed bird-horses, also occurring in embroideries, were found in archaeological digs from Finland to the Ural mountains in Finno-Ugric barrows. (Rabotnova 1968.) This same direction of research is still being pursued by A. P. Kosmenko, who focuses on the Vepsian and Karelian art of embroidery. Kosmenko came to the conclusion that the images of ornamentation occurring in embroidery, as well as in other forms of visual art among Finno-Ugric inhabitants of Karelia, were formed on the basis of local ornamentation established in the Middle Ages or possibly earlier. However, later ornamentation from the 19th century is close to the art of Northern Russians, especially those of adjacent regions. In addition, Kosmenko wrote about the role and functions of ornamented textiles in Vepsian and Karelian ritual practices. (Kosmenko 1981, 1984, 2002.)

Researchers have thus been interested in a variety of themes: the images of embroidered ornaments of the Karelian inhabitants, the origins of these images, and the uses of decorated textiles in rituals. Nevertheless, these investigations have only examined Karelian and Vepsian embroideries or Russian embroideries in isolation from one another. Taking into account earlier research and collected materials, I propose studying Karelian embroidery as an ethnocultural phenomenon in local and regional contexts, comparing some images of decoration accompanied by the utilization of folklore texts in order to postulate what these images reflected in Finno-Ugrian (Karelian and Vepsian) and Northern Russian traditions, and considering their stylistic and semantic features. This paper will analyze the complete process of making ornamented textiles and their ritual use according to specific semantic structures in order to comprehend their mythological depths, as well as the almost-vanished meanings of things that at one time formed the space of culture now called "traditional". It will then advance to uncover which elements of tradition remain essential in the modern day. In this article, the subject of study is female mythic images related to traditional textiles, their manufacture, use and ornamentation.

The Main Features of Traditional Karelian Embroidery

It is possible to discern distinct historical strata in the ornamentation of embroideries of Karelian peoples. These strata can be differentiated according to manual technique, iconography of plot, stylistic features, and above all according to their period of origin. The most ancient and archaic stratum contains geometrical figures: rhombuses and quadrangles in various configurations, swastikas, eight-petalled rosettes. To this stratum belong simple line representations of trees and plants as the most bountiful category of motifs among Vepsians, Karelians and Russians. Tree motifs often incorporate images of other figures (human, bird, animal).

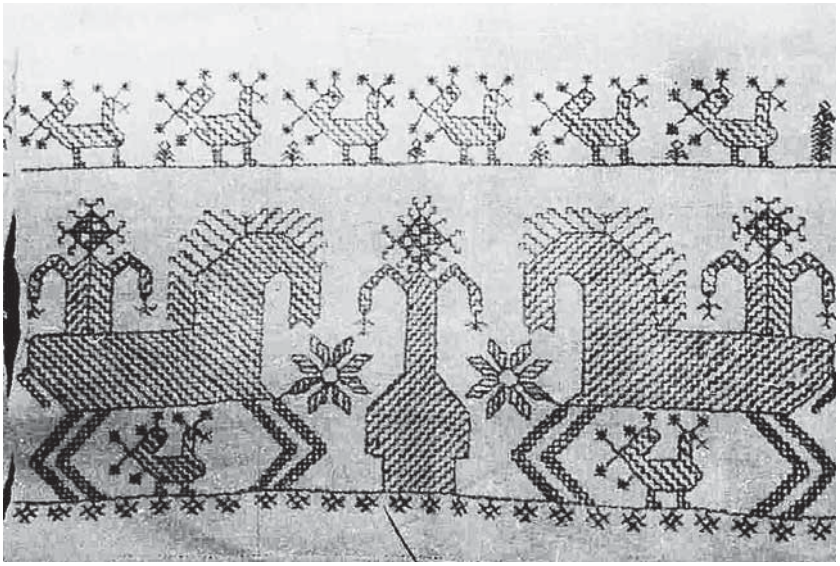

Photo 1. Red on white embroidery on the end of a home-woven towel using a double-running stitch. Late 19th century, Zaonež'e. Photo by the author, fieldwork in 1987.

To this stratum also belong three-part compositions with a female figure in the middle, geometricized anthropomorphic motifs of specific interpretation (arms spread, lower half of the body represented as a triangle), and highly stylized zoomorphic ornaments representing one- and two-headed birds and horses with quadrangles. They also include horses with a female rider. These types of motifs are particularly prominent in Vepsian and Karelian embroideries. Analogues to these motifs are found in archaeological materials from the Middle Ages, which include zoomorphic and ornithomorphic metal pendants distributed across Northern Europe. These types of embroideries were made using double-running stitch and satin stitch techniques, which are the most archaic methods for embroidering. Researchers believe that the roots of plot from this stratum trace back to Finno-Ugrian traditions of this region in the Middle Ages (Kosmenko 2002: 213).

The second stratum of ornaments is associated with the impact of the Russian State – first Novgorod, then Moscow (15th–16th centuries). This concerns heraldic animals: running lions, snow leopards and two-headed eagles which entered into embroidery through the influence of medieval Slavic urban art. These images were often transformed to become reminiscent of not only the eagle on a coat of arms, but also stretched zoomorphic and phytomorphic (i.e. plant-shaped) figures.

The third and youngest stratum (18th–19th centuries) is associated with the impact of Church art and urban art: the motifs of a flourishing tree or bush with graceful silhouettes; images of a Sirin (a bird with a woman's head), reminiscent of paintings and manuscripts possessed by Old Believers; themes associated with everyday life such park scenes and landscapes; untraditional plant motifs (ivy garlands) and other realistic subjects which formed under the impact of graphics and prints as new models.

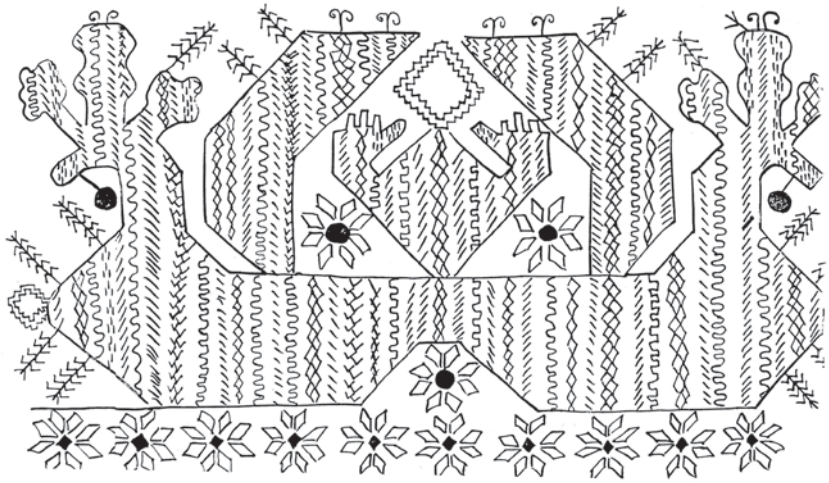

Photo 2. Red on white double-running stitch embroidery on a towel from Kargopol'e. Late 19th century. Arxangelsk' Museum of Wooden Architecture. Traced by the author in 1987.

The conceptual and visual models as well as the compositional systems engaged in the embroidering ornamentation are shared in common by Karelians, Vepsians and Russians of the former Olonec Province. At the same time, these symbols do not indicate clear ethno-local differentiation. Ethno-local features can only be traced through secondary elements: stylistic and technical execution. This phenomenon of areal interactions has been discussed by art historians (Ščedrina 1987: 41–47). The strata of this tradition have existed synchronically and the symbolism of this ornamentation was maintained in a coherent worldview system. Between the archaic composition of the geometricized contours and the realistic images formed under the influence of urban culture, it is possible to trace descendants of meanings and symbolism in their decor. Up to the beginning of the 20th century (and sometimes in modern times as well), embroidered objects were recognized in traditional consciousness as sacral and the ornamentation could not be essentially changed owing to their deep symbolism. Of course, we cannot discount the utilitarian decorative function that became prevalent over time. Nonetheless, the utilitarian aspect was secondary in traditional consciousness. Through the centuries, the compositions of ornamentation, decorative stitches, and range of colours, did not change tremendously. Of course, some new elements were introduced into this sphere of folk culture. New images were introduced, yet the old ones did not disappear.

It is possible to talk about the original Finno-Ugric tradition "growing into" the Northern Russian tradition, a process which could be explained by the complicated and stimulating ethnic history of the region. Slavic populations began encroaching on the territories inhabited by the ancient Čuds (ancestors of the modern Vepsians) and other Finno-Ugric peoples in the 12th century. They lived in close proximity for a very long time. Among the Russians, there were often marriages with Karelians. For example, it was common in Zaonež'e to take a Karelian wife. The other most important

vector of influence on traditional ornamentation in embroidery for both Russian and Finno-Ugric populations of Karelia was the religion of the Old Believers. It was precisely through the manuscript tradition and early printing tradition associated with the Old Believers that basic elements of daily life and plant ornamentation came into the painting of commonplace objects and traditional embroidery.

"Female" Images in Embroidery

As a subject, "textiles" are associated with the essence of woman. This is attributable to the role of woman in the traditional worldview. Ornamented textiles are a specific knot that binds worldview and its associated mythic conceptions together with the material sphere of culture and technology. Images on embroideries preserve echoes of the most ancient conceptions and worldviews from diverse epochs. The same images were transferred from generation to generation, preserving them through the ages. Innovations and changes have been introduced, but these were woven into traditional ornamental compositions that simultaneously preserved the succession of meanings and symbols. For the traditional human being, the ornamentation on a concrete object, the object itself and that object's function were distinctively interrelated. The symbolism of ornamentation is related to mythic conceptions of the world. Ornamentation is an iconic means to express a traditional worldview. The group of images employed in the ornamentation of textiles differs from the image systems of previous epochs (from pictures on stones, ceramics or metal) even if there are correspondences (motifs of waterfowl and animals). As a distinguishing feature, we could point out the very widely distributed images of embroidered anthropomorphic figures in the region of this study. These occur in many compositions, both in realistic representations as well as with features of syncretism, integrating motifs of woman, plant and animal. Let us consider the basic variants of anthropomorphic representations. The majority are comprised of images of a basic figure and often also of a figure inside of a larger figure, contaminated by zoomorphic and phytomorphic images or with these embroidered nearby. This is a characteristic feature of embroidered ornamentation for all peoples in Karelia. Distinctive ethnic features emerge only in terms of which motifs predominate. For example, anthropomorphic figures with linear contours reminiscent of trees are encountered more often in Vepsian embroideries in Prionež'e (Kosmenko 1984: 126, 129). Geometric motifs which are superimposed on floral compositions are characteristic of Karelian embroideries (Kosmentko 1981: 208, 2002: 163, 159). Phyto-anthropomorphic representations are also very characteristic of Russian embroideries in Zaonež'e Karelia, but they are often made in a different style with graceful, fluid contours. It is necessary to point out that the embroideries of Zaonež'e manifest numerous features similar to those of Vepsian and Karelian embroideries. The embroideries of Kargopol' differ from these by having more highly geometricized contours.

Quite a few research studies are devoted to anthropomorphic images

Photo 3. Red on white embroidery on a Karelian towel using double-running stitch and satin stitch. Early 20th century. Kondopožskij District. Photo by the author, fieldwork 2007.

in embroidery. First and foremost, these studies address three-part compositions with a female figure in the center made with a double-running stitch (Stasov 1872). These images are encountered among all of the peoples of Karelia and also in Ingria, and more generally among the Russian population of the Northwest (Sirelius 1925). Horses with riders are often embroidered on each side of this central figure. V. A. Gorodcov paid close attention to these compositions in Russian embroidery, arguing that the central anthropomorphic figure was the "Great Mother-Goddess", one of the most significant figures of the Slavic pagan pantheon. In embroidery, Gorodcov saw echoes of a cult of the great goddess and related her to a cult of the tree of life (Gorodcov 1926: 18–19). In Russian mythology, the mother goddess was a personification of the fecund earth and powers of fertility (Мать Сыра-Земля ['Mother Wet-Earth']).

I. I. Šangina made a painstaking examination of the ornamentation and ritual functions of embroidered towels in Russian tradition. She came to the conclusion that the ornamentation of towels reflect ideas of the coherence of life and death through the image of the World Tree and the Great Mother – the mistress of "this world" and the "otherworld". (Šangina 1975: 14, 16.) Corresponding images in the embroideries of Ladoga Karelia were investigated by Tyyni Vahter, who argued that some of the central figures were male, presenting parallels with images of hunting on Persian fabrics (from 600–700 AD). Embroidered anthropomorphic figures with horned head-cloths and plants in their hands were, in her opinion, representations of priests, candles, and even Christ making gestures of blessing. Vahter also pointed out that anthropomorphic figures were often superimposed on floral images for which there are parallels in Finnish Church fabrics of the medieval period. (Vahter 1938: 243–254.)

According to A. P. Kosmenko, female images in Vepsian embroidery are represented on the backs of one- or two-headed animals (birds or horses) or

escorted by horses. The legs of female figures are sometimes represented in the form of bird feet. Their palms are hypertrophically enlarged with three fingers; animal-like claws are emphasized. Almost every anthropomorphic figure "sprouts" branches. In Kosmenko's opinion, representations of upside-down birds make a lower border for anthropomorphic images, and features of "monstrous style" symbolize the relationship of those images to conceptions of the otherworld (Kosmenko 1984: 130). The symbolism of fertility is also present in images of the female: highly stylized human figures bearing the mark of the rhombus are found on the lower part of her body or on top of her head (Ambroz 1965).

These images in Vepsian and Karelian embroidery have many analogues in medieval metalwork – zoomorphic pendent amulets common to various Finno-Ugric cultures of the European North. These pendants were also found in Slavic territories which bordered on the "Čud" world. In addition, geometricized figures in frontal representations with similar style and iconography to embroidered images are found in materials from the early Middle Ages from Beloe Ozero and habitation areas of the ancient Merjas. Kosmenko reached the conclusion that this stratum of ornamentation in Vepsian and Karelian embroidery was formed on a medieval local Finno-Ugrian foundation (Kosmenko 1993: 45).

In Finno-Ugrian traditions – for example, in Komi and Udmurt – there are many female anthropomorphic of images of mistresses of natural forces: "Great Ancestral Mother" (a representation of Earth and Universe), "Mother of the Sun", "Mother of Forests" and so forth. Up to the present day, Udmurts have preserved conceptions of a female goddess who rules the fertility of the earth, human beings and animals (Šutova 2001: 215). A. P. Kosmenko believes that images of this sort are related to echoes of conceptions of anthropomorphic spirits in female form among inhabitants of Karelia, most of all among Vepsians (Kosmenko 1984: 124–130). There are very prominent representations of the image of this very powerful ancestral mother who rules the eternal cycle of life on cultic plates from the Middle Ages found in Prikam'e, and also in earlier representations of the Permian animal style. Among these objects, there is a group of images in which a central female figure is presented vertically between a symbol of the lower world (moose, lizard, bear, horse) and a symbol of the sky (birds, moose, snakes) and thus she binds together the celestial and the earthly. (*Mifologija Komi* 1999: 152, Limerov 2009: 191). These images have clear zoomorphic features, as do Vepsian embroidered female figures, but they differ in that the medieval and Permian examples have more zoomorphic features (moose hooves or bear paws in the place of feet; bird feet or wings in the place of hands). In the images of this ancient female figure, researchers see a goddess who is directly related to solar, life-giving power (supported by the solar symbolism appearing in conjunction with this goddess), to water, to the fertility of the earth, and to the world of flora. The name of this goddess is not preserved, but researchers hypothesize that an analogue of this goddess persisted in Komi tradition. Later, concepts of this figure fused with images of the Christian Mother of God and St. Paraskeva Pjatnica (Konakov 1996: 60, Limerov 2009: 199).

Karelians and Vepsians did not preserve conceptions of a particular goddess. Parallels to images of female figures in embroideries can also be found in the incantation tradition. The Virgin Mary appears in Finno-Karelian incantations as the "eldest of mothers", and the "one who eases the suffering of women in labour", on the same level as *Kivutar* ['Pain-Maiden'] or *Vaivatar* ['Ache-Maiden']. Anna-Leena Siikala has pointed out that the image of the mother who controls all pains and illnesses in the otherworld was already established in the beliefs of Northern cultures, as in traditions of shamanism in Northern Asia, and owing to that, images of the warder of illnesses and sufferings was conceived long before Christianity. The Finno-Karelian female image is most similar to Menglǫð of Scandinavian mythology, who also helps women in labour: in her realm there is a tree of fruit which hasten the coming of a child into this world. The Virgin Mary, Menglǫð and Pain-Maiden (also called the Maiden of Tuonela, Tuonela being a vernacular realm of the dead) have many similar features. (Siikala 1992: 171–172, 189.)

In addition to the three-part compositions in Karelian embroideries, it is possible to find a large stylized female figure incorporating features of a tree, a bird-boat, and surrounded by solar symbols (rosettes) and birds. This image was embroidered on shirts, valances (bed skirts), towels, and was often encountered in the regions of Pudož and Kargopol'.

The figure was made with a double-running stitch along the outline with multiple colours, owing to which it had geometricized contours. Three levels can be clearly seen in this image. There is a boat in the middle field. In the middle of the boat is a rhomb or square, in which is a solar rosette. Legs/branches extend down from the center, ending in a curve with small stylized human figures. Between the lower branches stands a small rhomb-headed figure with outstretched arms. There is also a human figure with arms/branches ending in crosses or small stylized figures in the upper level. In this type of embroidery, A. N. Rybakov saw the image of a woman in labour, and he connected this image with a legend about two celestial reindeer as an echo of the mythology of hunting cultures (Rybakov 1975: 7–34, 1981: 80). According to other researchers, embroideries of this type reflect the transformed image of a two-headed eagle (Efimova & Belogorskaja 1982: 90–91), or an image of fertility, in which "the most ancient image of agrarian cultures, that of the sun giving birth, is represented" (Durasov 1991: 65–78). I. M. Denisova (2003a, 2003b, 2006) has dedicated three articles to the semantic basis of complicated figural images of this type in Russian embroideries. In these articles, Denisova concludes that images of this type are connected to archaic Russian conceptions of the structure of the world, and reflect phyto-anthropomorphic and zoomorphic models of the world.

Changes encountered in different variants of embroideries moved in the direction of increasing the middle field, and when the whole image became heavier, assuming the features of an animal (frog). These features were also connected to conceptions about fertility (see further Baranov & Madlevskaja 1999: 112). In variants with chain stitch (or tambour technique) contours, one can see more fluid lines, and the whole composition looks organic.

In materials from the Pudož region, a corresponding type of image with sprawling forms was encountered, but lacking in clearly readable

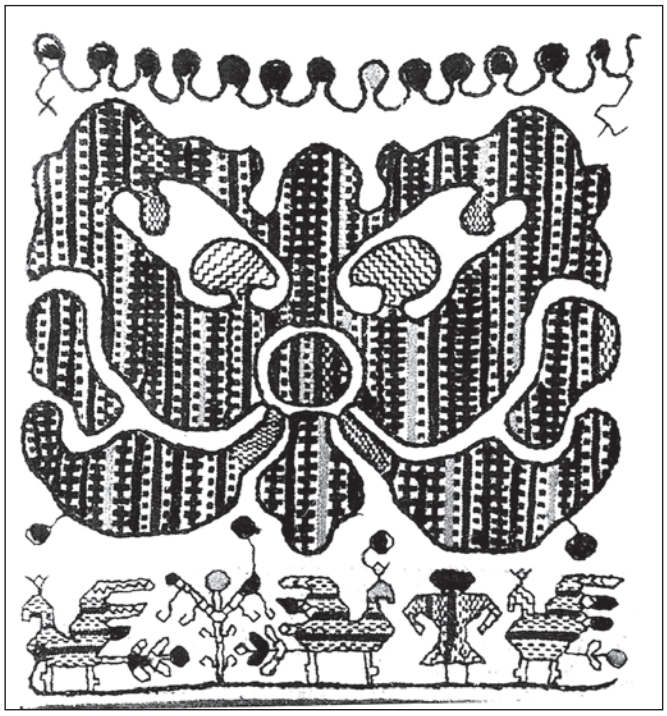

Photo 4. Multicoloured embroidery on a towel using a double-running stitch and satin stitch. Early 20th century. Kargopol'e. Photo by the author, fieldwork 1986.

details. This image, flowing over the fabric, was surrounded by ornamental elements. These images were made with chain stitch contours on the fabric in red. In the Pudož region, this variant is encountered on shirts, and slightly adapted on towels.

On one of the towels from the early 20th century, the anthropomorphicity of the central figure is completely unreadable. The image is highly stylized, but there are human figures embroidered in the proximity of this image: the bust of a humanoid figure appears on one side; on the other, a clearly male image (sexual features are emphasized) with a cross adjacent. This is the only known exemplar – which, of course, does not allow the luxury of making generalizations concerning its interpretation – but it nonetheless emphasizes the deep symbolic meanings with which embroiderers infused these images. In my opinion, the concurrence of a male figure (rare in embroideries) with the female figure, emphasizes and actualizes the female hypostasis of the central organic motif.

In the other variant, which is conventional for Pudož region shirt and towel embroideries, the upper field familiar from other variants is completely absent and emphasis is on the lower figure. This figure has a round head with small, up-turned, curved arms and long, out-turned, curved legs that then flow into branches. All variants of these images exhibit a mythology of a tree-woman over which stratified conceptions of the otherworld (the mistress of life and death) and fertility (the coded act of giving birth) have

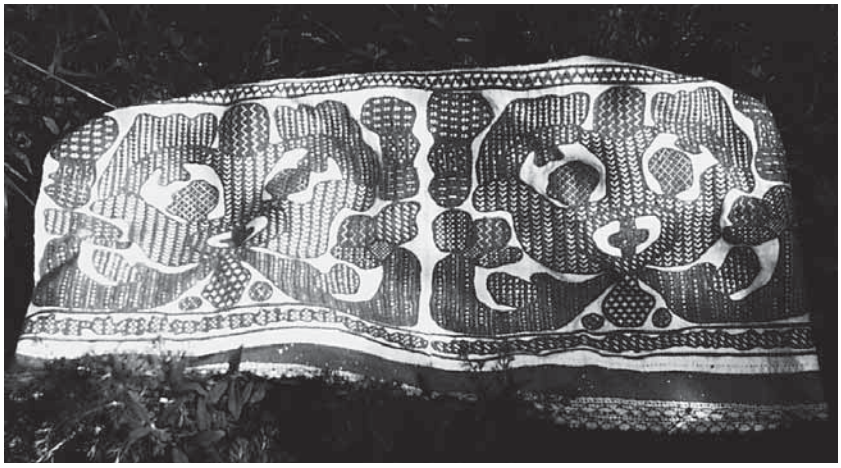

Photo 5. Red on white embroidery using satin stitch, and tambour technique on the hemline of a woman's shirt. Late 19th century. Pudož'e. Photo by the author, fieldwork 1989.

accumulated. The whole of this image is deeply symbolic and found only in the Pudož and Kargopol' regions.

The Image of the Bear and Its Derivatives in Embroideries

Here I would like to turn attention to the image of the bear, which is rare in embroideries of the regions under discussion. It is rare in the embroideries of Vepsians and Karelians. The image, given in profile, is highly stylized and

Photo 6. Red on white embroidery using satin stitch and tambour technique on the hand-woven towel. Early 20th century. Pudož'e. Photo by the author, fieldwork 1989.

Photo 7. Red on white embroidery using satin stitch and tambour technique. Early 20th century. Pudož'e. Private Collection.

interwoven with plant motifs. It is assumed that ornamental motifs of bear images were earlier widespread in the Karelo-Vepsian region, as paralleled by archaeological finds dated to the Middle Ages. On an ancient Vepsian firesteel, the image is also in profile and poorly defined (Kosmenko 1984: 82, 111–113). In embroideries of the Pudož and Kargopol' regions, another motif is more prominent: features of the bear are embroidered in a full frontal aspect, emphasizing the importance of the image and drawing it closer to the anthropomorphic figures sprawling across the fabric analyzed above (Dyrasov 1986: 158). The animal is embroidered quite realistically. It has a large head with ears and a body with outstretched limbs. An image of this sort was found on a towel from the Pudož region. Only the head of the bear and its outstretched forelegs were found on another towel from the Olonec Province.

There is a more syncretic image, in which the bear is in the center of the upper field, integrated with the image of a tree with tiers of upward-arcing branches forming the crown. If the hypostasis of the bear is recognizable on the towels, it has nevertheless been completely subordinated to the dendromorphic design on shirts. This variant was only encountered in Pudož regional embroideries. It is clearly a fusion of animal and plant symbols like the fusion of anthropomorphic and phytomorphic images of the same region. The style is also similar: large central figures in full frontal aspect with outstretched limbs in the pose of giving birth.

The bear is also known in images from the archaeological record of Karelia, without connection to a Slavic cultural milieu. Around the Vodlozero village of the Pudož region (dwelling Ileksa III, dated to the Iron Age), archaeologists found a relief image of three bear heads on a metal broach. This find belongs to objects in the Permian animal style of the 6th

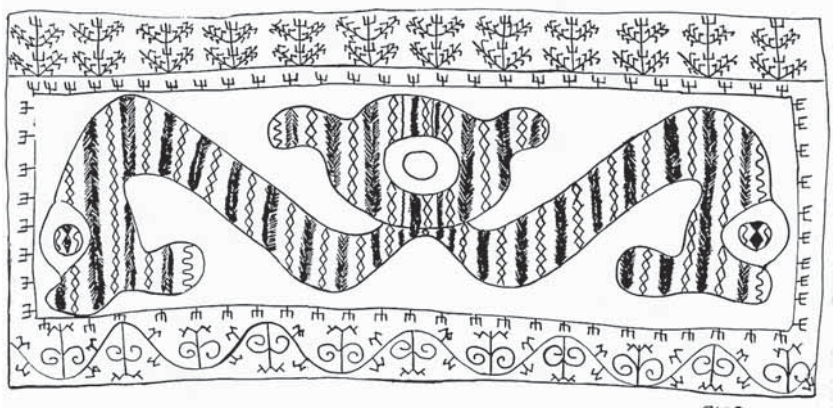

Photo 8. Red on white embroidery on a towel from Kargopol'e. Late 19th century. Russian Ethnographic Museum. Traced by the author, 1986.

and 7th centuries of the present era. In Karelia, finds of this sort are rare. Metal objects in zoomorphic style are more common to the Kama-Ural region. (Kosmenko & Kočkurkina 1996: 235, 270.) From this find, stylistic parallels are discernable. As in the embroideries, emphasis is on the head of the animal in full frontal aspect.

In studies of the mythological semantics of the bear, researchers highlight the dual nature of this animal. The bear is the lord of the forest and also a being very closely connected with the human being, even to the point that each can be reborn as the other; the bear is also a mediating chain between the binary oppositions of "house" and "forest", and of "own" and "other". In the Olonec Province, the bear was held in a very special regard. In the Pudož district in the 19th century, conceptions of the celestial nature of this animal were recorded: peasants thought that "the bear is from god" (Xaruzin 1894: 334).

It appears that female figures in Finno-Ugrian tradition were not reflections of Slavic conceptions about the Great Goddess (*Mat' syra zemlja* ['Mother of the Wet Earth']) who was a personification of the earth giving birth and powers of fertility in Russian mythology. According to folklore materials, Karelian, Vepsian, and also other Finno-Ugric peoples, had their own anthropomorphic female spirits and goddesses which derived from conceptions of a mistress of life and death, a figure who had power over people, their diseases, and who helped women in labour.

The image of a mighty ancestral mother was portrayed in Finno-Ugrian materials which predate medieval artefacts. A goddess surrounded by animals is an image occurring on metal objects in the Permian animal style. Parallels to these images can be found in Scandinavian mythology. Later, female goddesses of the Finno-Ugrian tradition were lost; the vernacular figures of folk belief were replaced by Christian figures – the Virgin Mary (Mother of God), St. Paraskeva Pjatnica, and other female saints.

As elsewhere in the Russian North, a so-called *časovnja* ['Orthodox village chapel'] would often be built where an old sacred grove was located. Continuously since times of old, women have brought their textile crafts

Photo 9. Red on white embroidery using satin stitch and tambour technique on the hand-woven towel. Early 20th century. Pudožže. Photo by the author, fieldwork 1989.

to locations (as to sacred springs and holy crosses) dedicated precisely to those female saints when a crisis situation emerged, such as illnesses of family members or livestock, prayers to have a child, or to banish bad luck. In the present day, this extremely important mediating sacrificial function of textiles is maintained even when the textiles are no longer handmade or embroidered by the women but rather store-bought. (Survo 2008: 163.) These holy places received special mythological meaning in the tradition and functioned as special gateways to the otherworld. When women address the female Christian saints that had assimilated features of vernacular antecedents, forgotten conceptions of the female goddess – that otherworld mistress of life and death who rules the eternal cycle of life – were actualized. This female goddess had different names in Slavic and Finno-Ugric traditions, but had essentially similar functions.

Syncretic images in embroideries, in which the image of woman–tree–bear can be read, reflect mythological conceptions about the world as a unity of plants, animals and human beings. These three images are intertwined in ornaments; they appear to be equivalent, actualizing concepts of the female origin of fertility, death and birth. All of these concepts became particularly important in the period before weddings, when many embroidered textiles were made, and also during the wedding ritual itself.

Embroidery as a Process

In traditional culture, fabrics are interesting for more than just their ornamentation. The homemade textile is in itself a universal symbol. The very essence of the process of making textiles is mythological. Ornamented textiles were a means of preserving special sacral information. The process of making textiles and the steps involved therefore warrant introduction here.

The linen fabrics of the objects of everyday life were made from flax. The process of making textiles therefore began when flax seed was sown into the earth. After that, the flax was harvested and processed, the processed fiber was spun, and then the spun fiber was woven on a loom. Only then could the

fabric be embroidered. Some operations in this process could be found that would have no practical significance from the perspective of modern culture, and therefore should be of no consequence for the final product. These were ritual acts, and from the perspective of a traditional worldview, they were important and even central in relation to the rudimentary, practical operations which produced the material object. This was possible because the outcome was not just a thing, not just some material object. With the assistance of ritual, a thread was strung into the past, weaving an analogy to the "primary essential object" – to the sacred model – made within strict and explicit rules. Following those rules ensured the quality of the "copy" with its essential characteristics, including the practical. Therefore, among other things, the practical use of the material object was defined by the correspondence of two events through ritual: the creation of the world and the making of objects (Bajburin 1989: 68).

All of the processes involved in making linen, processing flax and making it into textiles were associated with female functions. The ornamented textiles themselves (embroidered towels, women's shirts and headdresses, bed linens) had the pragmatics of signs, and they held very important roles in rituals, particularly those related to a woman's life-cycle. Women (first a mother and then the girl herself) prepared the dowry and gifts for a wedding, and also textiles to be used in the wedding, when giving birth, in funeral memorial, as well as in family rituals and so-called crisis rituals. The complete life-cycle of the maiden/woman can be seen through the process of making textiles: a woman makes textiles for the dowry and wedding presents, marrying, and then for giving birth to a child and participating in other rituals.

It is both productive and logical to trace the meaning of each level in the sequence of the textile production process, looking at the role of symbolic objects which are related to the process of processing flax, and also at the functions of ornamented textiles as signs which appear in different ways in the life-cycle: child – maiden/bride – young wife – (married) woman – old woman.

The participation of men was only in the very beginning of these processes, in sowing the seeds of the flax. It is possible to trace erotic motifs in simultaneously conducted ritual acts. In the Slavic tradition, the earth was associated with female origins (a woman's womb). In the process of sowing flax seeds, the symbolism of fertilization is clearly present, in contrast to cultivating other grains, because flax was considered "feminine" cultivation (Bernštam 1988: 136). On Midsummer's Day, young maidens rolled in the fields where flax grew. When the flax began to bloom, they would walk there so that "it grows pure and taller" (PMA, Kargopol'e).

The symbolism of fertilization during the sowing, and also the symbolism of fertility in the other ritual practices can be observed from the first stages of making textiles, and thereby fertility is conveyed both to the plant and also to the participants in the ritual, primarily to youths. Harvesting and processing flax was only a prelude to spinning, weaving on the loom, and embroidering. All together, these made a special cycle which includes all stages of making textiles. It was drawn out across the whole year, which corresponded to the annual rhythm of a woman's life.

Spinning flax was primarily done during the dark autumn-winter period, in the evenings when rush-lights were burning, from *Pokrov* (the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God) until *Maslenica* ['Pancake Week'[22]]. Spinning with a distaff and drop spindle was the most widespread technique of spinning among all people in Karelia. All women in the family participated in spinning, but a special role was played by maidens preparing their dowries and those just married. Wool was supposed to be spun by young women so that the "lambs would grow better" (Bernštam 1988: 160). Young maidens spun both at home and at a *beseda* (a gathering of young people with singing and dancing), when one was organized for the evening (*OGV* 1896, no. 59). Spinning was a public act at which people could observe the skills of the maiden/bride and her readiness for marriage.

The distaff followed the life of a peasant woman from her birth to her death. Karelians and also Russians had the custom of hanging a distaff on the cradle of a baby girl in order to keep the female house spirit occupied when she came at night – otherwise she would make the baby cry. In Zaonež'e Karelia, this female spirit was *mara*, in Olonec Karelian this female spirit was *itkettäjä* ['one who causes crying'] (Loginov 1986: 33, Surhasko 1985: 47). According to other materials, unspun flax was put into the cradle for the same reason. *Mara*, just as *Kikimora* ['female house spirit'], belongs to the spinning house spirits which are associated with the world of the dead (Kriničnaja 2000: 89).

From about the age of six, a girl was taught how to spin, and this instruction continued into her teens. Her relationship to the distaff was special. A mother therefore taught her girls to "put away the distaff with blessings, otherwise *Kikimora* will spin." When done spinning, the distaff had to be put away. However, it could not simply be put away: it had to be put away with special words: "Sing with God, my sweet little distaff." (Novikova [Survo] 1992: 131.)

In Northern Russian and Karelian traditions, the distaff was considered a special object – it was a helper of the woman and a diviner, and it was connected to the cult of the ancestors (Novikova 2000: 69). The process of spinning was itself surrounded by ritual norms and taboos which were preserved in the collective memory of women. Various spinning (weaving, embroidering) spirits – *domovoj* ['house spirit'], *mara*, *kikimora* – are found in Northern Russian stories and belief legends. These various types of handiworkers essentially duplicate the magical acts of mythological beings and their images emerge from the corresponding archetype. Concepts of mythic beings that govern the appropriate time for spinning and that punish those breaking prohibitions held an extremely vital place in the mythology of Poles'e. Researchers account for this owing to the connection between the technology of spinning and the mythic sphere. Technological operations connected to twining, twisting, weaving, winding, sewing, tying knots, and so forth, were understood as related to the otherworld and its inhabitants. Therefore, these activities were capable of impacting the lives of the community in a magical way, and even believed capable of impacting the common organization of the world. (Vinogradova 2009: 4.)

In this tradition, a girl at spinning was considered to be spinning

the thread of her life – as though "programming" her own destiny. The communal spinning during *beseda* evenings were loci at which the destiny of a young maiden was programmed (Kriničnaja 2000: 104). As a process, spinning appears on the same level with ritual functions of preparation for marriage. Concepts related to it stand beyond ethnic borders: they are rooted in archaic views concerning the otherworld and also concerning the cult of the ancestors. These archaic features are characteristic of both Finno-Karelian and Russian traditions, although much more clearly evident in the latter.

Understanding the semantics of female ritual functions must be distinguished according to two main processes – spinning and weaving – and also understanding the symbolic relationships of these. Along the continuum of mythic conceptions, spinning had a dark, "lower" nature (cf. e.g. Ivanov 1976: 268–287), although in the typological row of guardians of spinning – *Mokoš*,[3] St. Paraskeva Pjatnica and the Mother of God – the last is characterized by "light" symbolism (Bernštam 1988: 161). Weaving was normally done in the spring, which means during the light period of the year. The semantics of relationships between mythic handiworkers and a special time period is also reflected in etymologies. The Russian word *sutki* ['twenty-four hour period'], comes from the word *tkat'* ['that which is woven'] (Savel'eva 1997: 76). Mythical, often female beings weave (spin) days, time. M. M. Valencova (2011: 311) studied conceptions of time and space in folk weaving in Polesʹe and observed that the time of weaving had itself a protective function.

Like the distaff, the drop spindle is an important ritual attribute, and a mythical spinner often even appears in the form of a drop spindle (Kriničnaja 2000: 93). The word *vereteno* ['drop spindle'] has the same etymological root as Old Russian *veremja* (Modern Russian *vremja* ['time']), meaning "that which spins"[4] (Savel'eva 1997: 76, Valencova 2011: 310). Female ritual functions in weaving are rooted in concepts of mythic beings which participate in the creation of the world through their handiwork.

If weaving were primarily the work of women (mothers were weaving fabric both for their families and for their daughters), then embroidering was the sphere of work of young maidens/brides. A maiden would be sewing and embroidering her own dowry and wedding presents, although her friends would help her prior to the wedding. This was typical in both Finnic and Russian ethnic traditions, as often observed in the literature (cf. Salminen 1931: 41, Haltsonen 1965). As a process, embroidering and the activity related to it were associated with the light period of the year and celebrations.

The image of a maiden doing embroidery is among the most stable symbols in wedding rituals. In wedding laments, a maiden embroiders her "maidenhood", which is a metaphorical means for saying farewell to her maidenhood (Kolpakova 1941: 165). A. P. Kosmenko (1983: 23–55) suggested a possible relationship between embroideries among Karelians and initiations associated with age. In relation to this, it is important to point out that in the Northern Russian tradition, skills in embroidery, spinning and weaving were also a necessary and institutionalized form of behaviour

for maidens. The main purpose of this was to initiate the maiden into the values of previous generations.

In the Zaonež'e region, a maiden's skills in embroidery were equivalent to a boy's literacy (Krasnopol'skaja 1987). The etymological correspondence of the Finnish words *kirjoa* ['to embroider'] and *kirjoittaa* ['to write'] can be introduced for comparison. It is also appropriate to draw a parallel between teaching maidens the art of lamenting. As is well known, laments were an important part of rites of passage (weddings, funerals; cf. Stepanova, this volume): for a peasant girl, an inability to lament was as shameful as an inability to spin (Čistov 1988: 30). Up to her wedding, a maiden learned a lot of different ritual "languages", one of which was also skill in handiwork. The future bride would be crafting her destiny while embroidering the ornaments on homemade textiles for her wedding.

The role of textiles in wedding rituals has been examined in detail in many studies as an important attribute which had many functional and semantic meanings.[5] Textiles, prepared by a maiden with the help of her mother, were used for marking figures in wedding ceremonies and in the whole wedding space (the room where the wedding ceremony was held and the wedding cavalcade). The number of towels prepared for a wedding in well-to-do families would be in the dozens. According to my fieldwork materials, in the 1920s–1930s, a bride gave as many as fifteen towels as gifts. A few sheets with embroidered edges were also given as gifts. In the Zaonež'e region, for example, there were the sayings, "A bride has seven naked old women behind the stove," and, "As long as you have not embroidered forty sheets, don't go to marry!" (Novikova [Survo] 1988: 54).

Hanging the towels in a house could be interpreted as echoes of sacrificing to one's own house spirits and kin spirits (Kosmenko 1984: 47). The similar use of towels in Karelian wedding rituals is also related to spirits and protectors of the husband's family as well as to the cult of the ancestors (Surxasko 1977: 192). Offerings, such as towels, which the bride gave to her mother-in-law, were also interpreted by researchers as echoes of a more ancient tradition – this explanation was, at least, still current at the beginning of the 20th century. The meaning of the gift was clearly more archaic. For example, the towel was hung on the stove pipe accompanied by bowing to the stove pipe and not by bowing to the mother-in-law at all. Towels were left in the sauna in order to establish a good relationship with the "host" of the sauna, and so on. Nonetheless, the mother-in-law did receive these gifts later on. (Surxasko 1976: 148, Maslova 1951: 33.) In the exchange of those embroidered objects – which the researcher of Slavic traditions E. Gasparini (1973: 209) referred to poetically yet exactly as "women's money" – the bride received good will from the members of the new family, protection from the spirit guardians, and proved her readiness for marriage.

The mythological foundations of women's work were actualized during the wedding. In demonstrating that she had acquired sacred skills, the bride assumed a special role corresponding to that of mythical beings (spinning beings, weaving beings, embroidering beings). Like them, she was participating in the creation of the world and the creation of her own destiny through her handiwork. Rituals related to spinning and weaving also

continued after the wedding. Ritual payments with textiles prepared during the bride's maidenhood continued during her first year in the new family. The wedding ritual, as well as the periods before and after it, teemed with the themes of spinning, weaving and sewing: spinning during the *smotriny* ['observation ritual']; sewing and embroidering following courtship; the final preparation of the dowry before the wedding; spinning at the evening event for the young wife following the wedding, which also had verbal components. If we look at the verbal components of Karelian and Vepsian wedding rituals, then the fact that texts of this kind were not very elaborate and were most often in the Russian language could be attributed to their being loans from the Northern Russian wedding tradition (Surxasko 1981: 267). Spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidering could be interpreted as marking special steps of transition in the Northern Russian wedding complex: they are essential to getting married and for initiating younger women into a new age group; they also exhibit an originally mythological foundation.

Modern Interpretations of Traditional Heritage

Embroidery ornamentation originally had deep mythic roots with a function of magical protection. The gradual loss of this function led the aesthetics of decoration to become predominant. Influences from urban culture made available new materials as well as different techniques and new stylistic means. The artistic consciousness of embroiderers changed so that they were no longer satisfied with geometricized archaic motifs and these were displaced by elaborate plant-flower compositions, scenes from everyday life, and figures and compositions taken directly from patterns. The art of textile ornamentation was tightly interfaced with the worldview and everyday routines of pre-modern country life. It had always been open to accept all sorts of different influences without significantly disrupting the specific traditional and ethnic features that characterized it. As the symbolic role of ornaments was gradually extinguished, their aesthetic role as decoration developed and replaced the symbolic. Such transformations are typical of most archaic elements of traditional culture, as seen in the transformation of ritual performance into a game, of an idol into a toy, and so forth.

Now, in the present day, the traditional symbols of embroidery of Karelians, Vepsians and Russians in Karelia are subject to yet another actualization and recoding, acquiring new configurations, meanings and means for their execution. Modern embroideries are made in art studios and are only quite vaguely reminiscent of archaic decoration. (Survo 2009: 274–278.) The reproduction of pseudo-archaisms is realized through the process of modern reconceptualizations of ethnocultural heritage. Ethnocultural experience develops into an aspect of simulative entertainment, adapting tradition to fit into a mould for a level of culture appealing to the average consumer. The heart of this process's significance is captured in the slogan of the American Society for Creative Anachronism: *We do not recreate the Middle Ages as they really were, but as they ought to have been* (see Solov'ëva

2008: 246). (Media) images of objects of pre-modern country life now serve as a specific channel for the transmission of conceptions about traditions that form on the basis of knowledge from museums and books. In the present day, traditional symbols, displaced from their natural contexts, play a dual (anti-)cultural role of "work in movement" (Eco 1989, cf. Kuz'mina 2009). It has become typical of the tourist industry to select and mobilize themes that are unconventional for traditional handiwork and to interpret these as transformed ancient images and symbols. This process corresponds to the self-describing level of modern culture. (Survo & Survo 2012.) Modern interpretations of traditional heritage reveal tendencies towards the quasi-mythologization of the realities of everyday life of countryside and to transform ethnic culture into an object for consumption. Although they frequently lack any utilitarian function or connection to any pre-modern routine, such designer "lines" and "quotations" of traditional heritage are invested with artificial symbolic meaning within their new cultural environment.

Translated by Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 The Kargopol' region is now administratively included in the Arxangelsk' Oblast.
2 *Maslenica* is an eastern Slavic religious and folk holiday which is celebrated during the last week before Great Lent. – *Translator's note.*
3 In Slavic mythology, *Mokoš* is a goddess connected with women's activities. – *Translator's note.*
4 The verb 'to spin' is intransitive here; i.e. time is spinning. – *Translator's note.*
5 E.g. Heikinmäki 1970, Lukkarinen 1981, Maslova 1978, Kosmenko 1983, 1984, 1988, Novikova [Survo] 1988, 1992.

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Place, Space and Time IV

Karina Lukin

Narrating the Last Shaman

In 2004, the settlement of Bugrino experienced a period of heightened political discussion related to the new leader of the settlement's council. This settlement is located on the southern shore of Kolguev Island in the south-eastern Barents Sea, and belongs to the Nenets Autonomous District of the Russian Federation. Although the new leader of the council was a resident of the settlement, he was ethnically Ukranian, and according to the Nenets, he had not been living up to his promises – complaints which were soon heard in Nar'jan-Mar, the centre of the District. Vladimir Počečikin, a journalist from the Nar'jan-Mar newspaper *Vybor Naroda*, came to the island for two weeks and wrote a series of articles in which he reproduced the stereotypical pessimistic images outsiders have about Nenets settlements (Počečikin 31.07.2004, 04.08.2004, 07.08.2004). These views are crystallized in the statement: "life on the island is pure, unbearable torment" (Počečikin 07.08.2004). Later that same year, Počečikin published a response to a letter from Bugrino, in which he described how an older Nenets man had painted some paintings for him during his time on the island. One of the paintings was a depiction of the painter's grandfather, and when Počečikin had asked the painter's older brother whether he recognized the figure represented on the canvas, the man replied: "Of course I know. He's our grandpa. When he died, we slept with our heads side by side." (Počečikin 26.10.2004.) This is all that is publicly told about the death of Purpèj, one of the most powerful shamans of Kolguev Island. His death is hardly discussed at all, but his feats are well-known lore amongst the Nenets islanders.

For centuries, researchers of Northern religions have been fascinated by both shamanism and the shamanistic folklore connected to it. Mentions and descriptions of shamanistic visions, spirit journeys and dramatic shamanic performances are well established features in the travelogues of missionaries and explorers of the North.[1] Shamans have been viewed as exceptional figures in their communities, while their use of language and metaphors in ritual singing has been seen as an exceptionally archaic. This is only natural considering that shamans *are* quite exceptional in their knowledge about the otherworld and its structure; their knowledge of mythology; their ability to move in worlds unknown or inaccessible to the uninitiated; their power to summon, command and negotiate with spirits. However, it is quite unusual

for researchers of northern shamanism to depict shamans outside of ritual contexts, for example in their roles as fathers or mothers – as mortal beings. Interestingly, the death of individual shamans or shamanism in general has become a popular theme in contemporary shamanistic studies and literature (Plužnikov 2005, Lehmuskallio 1995, Lapsui & Lehmuskallio 2010). Amongst Nenets, the death of a shaman is not a common theme in the discourse surrounding shamans, although the shamans are recalled and their graves are of special importance. In the first decades of the Soviet era, most of the shamans in the Russian North were either silenced or killed – events which have provided the foundations for narratives that are primarily concerned with the fates of abandoned attributes (shaman drum, costume, mask, etc.) or offer representations of the killers themselves. The public nature of Soviet persecutions and the associated atheistic propaganda that established "the last shaman" as a figure provided favourable conditions for indigenous peoples to tell about their own last shamans, and to tell about their deaths. In these local level narratives, tellers have to choose how to present the shaman: they can orient their narratives toward the "shamanistic", and thus also toward mythic worlds and mythic images, or they utilize the same mythic associations to create a gap in the construction of an image of a shaman who is more or less as mortal and effable as any other member of the community. These choices are intended to create contexts for interpretations and thereby give rise to meanings.

This article will present two narratives about Amgalëv, the last shaman of the island of Kolguev. The first was told to me by a recognized narrator of Nenets folklore, an elderly man who can be described as a so-called good informant. The other version is published in a book about Kolguev Island written by the Russian journalist Vasilij Golovanov (2002). The latter based his account on the telling of Amgalëv's son, who was already an old man at the time. The stories represent two alternative possibilities for realizing the narrative, and each is oriented to a different Taleworld (Young 1987), one to a shamanistic Taleworld, and the other to a modern, post-Soviet Taleworld. These Taleworlds minimize and maximize the gap (respectively) between the constructed image of Amgalëv and the shamanistic tradition, understood as a broad framework for shamanism and for talking about shamanism. As folklore, both accounts represent stories about shamans told from laymen's perspectives, and therefore differ from shamanistic folklore in the sense of shamanistic traditions from the perspective of the shamans. The Taleworlds of these narratives will be examined on the thematic level, because reliable interpretations on a more subtle linguistic level are not possible owing to the presentation by Nenets or of the Nenets narrative in the Russian language. This paper will investigate how the tellers construct their tellings and the consequences which follow from those choices, and it will also consider how the two tellings settle into the context of the settlement of Bugrino.

Nenets Shamanistic Practices

Nenets shamans usually inherited their status and knowledge from a parent or grandparent. The social role of shaman was not up to the individual him- or herself; it was believed that the spirits chose a person to be a shaman. (Castrén 1853: 197.) This was not a position which one desired, but rather a quality to be cultivated under the guidance of an older shaman, a secret tradition which was normally handed down from father to son. However, as Anna-Leena Siikala has observed, the tradition is not limited to knowledge of the otherworld and rite techniques; a shaman had to internalize a tremendous quantity and range of traditions as an organic part of his worldview in order to fulfil his role as mediator with the otherworld. (Xomič 1981: 8–9, Siikala 2002: 66–70.)

There were many kinds of shamans, and individual shamans were more or less widely known, some known widely for their powers while others only worked within their own communities. Differences between types of shamans were born of their spheres of knowledge and abilities. Some could only see the future or find lost animals, others were capable of healing the sick and communicating with spirits of heaven, while still others were consulted in hunting when prey was scarce or when a large catch was sought. In addition to these, shamans who assumed the role of psychopomp, guiding the dead to the underworld, were recognized a distinct type of shaman. (Lehtisalo 1924: 150, Xomič 1981: 13–15, Lar 1998: 24–28.) Nenets shamans were consulted in many kinds of crisis situations and a shaman acted "on behalf of his group members" (Hultkrantz 1973: 34), who were not able to communicate with the otherworld themselves. It was thought impossible for a shaman not to help people when he was asked: he was obliged to act according to his duties (Lehtisalo 1924: 165).

It seems that only the most powerful Nenets shamans used special costumes and a drum during séances. The séances themselves only included drumming if the shaman used a drum himself. Otherwise they included singing, recitation and prayers in the conical tent or, for example, near hunting or fishing grounds. During the séance, a shaman first prepared him- or herself, then began by defining verbally the purpose of the ritual and summoning helping-spirits. S/he described his or her journey to the otherworld and the spirits s/he met there, as well as his/her discussions with the spirits – both those who helped the shaman on the journey and also those who provided resolutions for the situation at hand. The shaman could attain an ecstatic state or trance during the séance, which is why s/he usually had an assistant with him/her. The assistant not only protected the shaman from hurting himself; the assistant's main purpose was to collaborate with the shaman, replicating his words, commenting on his journey and even guiding the ritual process itself. The assistant was usually a shaman at an initiatory level. (Lehtisalo 1924: 151–159, Siikala 1978 [1987]: 201–211, Lar 1998: 34–36.)

Shamanism should not be seen as a closed system of beliefs and rituals, but as an extremely open and tolerant practice. In the words of Anna-Leena Siikala (1978 [1987]: 17): "In being linked with the shamanic tradition complex traditional elements of differing origin have become moulded in

accordance with the basic ideology upholding shamanism and have gained shamanic significance." This explains the tenacity of shamanism in pre- and post-Soviet Northern Russia, where Christian and atheistic missions have pressed the shamans.

Shamanism and Christianity among the Kolguev Nenets

Orthodox Christianity has been an integral part of Kolguev Nenets religiosity since the earliest written sources that mention any details about the Nenets on the island. Culturally, the Kolguev Nenets are generally representative of Western Nenets, most probably having moved to the island from the Kanin Peninsula and the Timanskaja tundra in the late 18th and 19th centuries, and they have also had extremely close and regular contacts with the Russian population of the area.[2] Thus, they were already acquainted with Christian beliefs and saints before the first official missionary activities on the European tundras of Russia. (Lehtisalo 1924: 4, Vallikivi 2003: 110–111.) The first missions were conducted in 1825–1830 under the direction of the Archimandrite Veniamin. According to the statistics, these missions were very successful: the priests baptized practically every Nenets in the European tundra and three churches were built in the wake of Veniamin's missionary work. Veniamin also told how he destroyed sacred places and preached in Tundra Nenets to an impressed indigenous population. (See Vallikivi 2003.) It is probable that the first Nenets in Kolguev evaded Veniamin's mission, but already considered themselves Orthodox Christians nonetheless. This can be deduced variously from vernacular oral history, the reports of early priests, and also from the fact that a Nenets shaman had already built a chapel on the island prior to active missionary work there (e.g. GAAO 29/2t.5/534: 6; Kozmin 1913: 16). The priests who began to frequent Kolguev at the end of the 19th century also described the Nenets as Orthodox Christians, although they considered them to be ignorant of Christian dogma and true Christian practice. After his trip in 1910, the priest of Tel'viska Samoed Church, Aleksandr Ivanovskij, reported the following to the Spiritual Consistory in Arxangel'sk:

> Идолов и идолопоклонников среди самоедов проживающих на Колгуеве нет, все православные крещеные. Познания религиозния очень слабыя, знают Бога, Божию матерь, Миколу, крестятся правильно, православным крестом. Молитв знают: Во имя отца и Сына и Святаго Духа, Господи помилуй [....] Два грамотных самоедина знающие молитвы: Святому Духу, Пресвятой Троице, Молитву Господию [....] (GAAO 29/2t.6/684: 8.)

> There are no idols or idolaters amongst the Samoyeds [Nenets] living in Kolguev; they are all baptized Orthodox. Their knowledge of religion is very poor, they know God, the Mother of God, Mikola,[3] they make the sign of the cross correctly in the manner of an Orthodox cross. They know prayers: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Lord, have mercy [....] There are two literate Samoyeds who know the prayers: to the Holy Spirit, to the Holy Trinity, the Lord's prayer [....]

The Nenets had also assured the priests of their belief, saying: "We cannot pray better [...] as we don't understand what is written in the books and know Russian very badly. But we love praying. What would happen to us, what would we do here on the island without God and Mikola, we rely only on them." (GAAO f.29/2t.6/684: 8.) Across those same years, natural scientists visiting Kolguev documented idols, sacred places and sincere respect for these objects of the Nenets ethnic religion. For example, I. Perfil'ev states that although the Nenets told him that their wooden gods were ceremonially burned 80 years earlier, they were still sacrificing in front of the church and for "all of the wooden 'little things'" (Perfil'ev 1928: 6–7). The English biologist Aubyn Trevor-Battye repeatedly described religious practices in the church of Bugrino, the chapel of Šarok and on the sacred hills of the island. He also addresses the practice of hiding the ethnic religion from outsiders and assuring them of their Orthodox faith while in reality the ethnic religion lived side by side with Christianity, or rather the two interfaced. (Trevor-Battye 2004: 190–192, 309, 332, 335–338.) This practice was also finally realized by priests in Arxangel'sk (Kozmin 1913: 8). The Nenets had realized that Orthodox Russians wanted them to abandon their ethnic religion, while they themselves saw these religious systems as parts of a larger whole. Assimilating the Orthodox religion to their own religious models, the Nenets persisted in their own modes of thinking, which made it problematic for outsiders to see them as true Christians.

This phenomenon has not been uncommon in missionary and other colonial encounters, where missionaries have assumed that their "superior" way of thinking had taken the place of indigenous ways. They have variously seen the tolerant relativism of indigenous practices as condemnable syncretism or ignored it entirely, as seems to have been at least partly the case in Kolguev. (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991: 225, Vallikivi 2003.) Ironically, shamans appear to have been the most active in assimilating Orthodox elements into the Nenets religion: they built two chapels in Kolguev, organized services, read prayers and bound Orthodox figures in Nenets religious folklore.[4] Nevertheless, they have also hesitated in naming themselves as shamans and thus remained out of sight. This was more than the politics of caution; it is rooted in the shamanistic traditions themselves. The shaman is named by the spirits and his abilities are negotiated within the community, hence the shaman does not determine his/her status him- or herself or report it to others. Consequently, priests worked intensively with Kolguev shamans without realizing it: the priests never knew the religious status of these men – or at least they do not mention it in their official reports which describe Nenets religiosity in many other ways. (E.g. GAAO 29/2t.6/450: 14.)

Shamans in Soviet Society

Generally, shamans were thought to be the most visible representations of ethnic religions, but they were also identified as repositories of backwardness – hence Soviet modernising campaigns in the North concentrated on

persecuting the shamans (Slezkine 1994: 226–228). The persecution of shamans was openly discussed immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, but it has not been such a visible theme – at least among the Nenets – thereafter. Kolguev Nenets report that there were no persecutions of shamans or other *kulaks*[5] on the island at all. Nonetheless, there are no living shamans in the present day either, according to the common view. One recurrent Kolguev narrative tells that shamans ceased practicing their duties because people no longer wanted or needed them. Although there are people who had practiced shamanism, they have hidden their attributes (e.g. drum, costume, mask, etc.) and renounced their status. I have heard their names from urban intelligentsia, who are more open in speaking about shamanism. However, the issue is more delicate in Kolguev, where people feel uneasy about the openness of intelligentsia. Thus, when I asked about these individuals in Bugrino, I was warned not to mention shamanism when the old shamans are around. There is a prevalent tendency to shut one's mouth about shamanism. This could be interpreted as a continuation of a long tradition of keeping quiet about the ethnic religion and about shamans which dates back at least to the time of the first missionary activity. For example, Galina Xarjuči (2001: 95), a Nenets ethnographer, mentions that on the Gydan Peninsula, shamans continued their work during the Soviet years, but never in the presence of outsiders.

Falling silent can also be seen in the light of the hard fates of the shamans, who had to give up their duties. These are usually sweeping, spiritual, personal and family tragedies, and people are not willing to open these old wounds. However, the continuation of shamanism is expressed implicitly in comments like, "When he died, we slept with our heads side by side," which was quoted at the beginning of this article. Here, the grandson refers to everyday practices of using the conical tent, making reference to being the closest to his grandfather as the one who was sleeping beside him. This implies that he knows him better than anyone else. As most shamans made their spirit journeys during sleep, sleeping beside a dying shaman also carries quite a strong impression of the inheritance of shamanic status and helping-spirits from the grandfather.

The shaman also became a literary figure in the Soviet Union, a character that abandons his status and attributes to embrace modernity. Yuri Slezkine situates this figure within the Soviet Long Journey -paradigm, depicting the climb of Northern peoples from backwardness toward Soviet modernity. In the early Soviet literature on Northern peoples, the shaman figure was the villain who left his people for the tundra and backwardness, to be eventually crushed or ridiculed. Later on, additional narratives emerged about shamans choosing the right or the wrong way, donating their attributes to a museum or even throwing idols under a tractor to help it get out of ditch. (Slezkine 1994: 297, 331, 354.) Eva Toulouze (2004: 225–226) has found this figure in early Nenets literature: in Ivan Noxo's play *Shaman*, the shamans deceive people, exploit them, do not live in compliance with the law and are enemies of Soviet power. The negative figure of the shaman even lives in the text books of elementary schools, where shamans were usually compared to a doctor. In this context, shamans advance from threatening the political

system to threatening the physical hygiene of the North. For example, in the first textbook for first-year children by G. Prokof'ev, there is a chapter entitled "Sick Hylej" in which a boy called Hylej spent the summer in the conical tent with his grandmother while his father was with the reindeer:

> Once Hylej got sick. Grandmother called a shaman. The shaman came and began to shamanize. He shamanized until midnight. In the morning, Hylej was even more sick. Hylej's father came and said: 'The shaman cheats people. You shouldn't go to a shaman. Shamans cannot heal people. You need to go to a hospital. Doctors heal a sick man.' Hylej's father took Hylej to a doctor. Hylej soon recovered. (Prokofjew 1934: 47, 72–73.)

Toulouze (1990) has noted that people were reluctant to use the early text books because the Latin alphabet[6] was strange to both the teachers and the pupils. The themes have nonetheless passed over into the later books. In the same manner, the early writers have more or less been forgotten, or as Toulouze (2004: 227) puts it, represent a "generation of misunderstanding". Still, the figure of a cunning and defeated shaman also survived amongst the Nenets propagandist imagery across the Soviet period. This figure lives, for example, in the texts of Vasilij Ledkov,[7] a popular Nenets writer whose first works are from the 1960s. In the seventh chapter of his novella *Sineva v arkane* ['The Blue One in a Lasso'] (1970), Ledkov first depicts a narrative of a shaman who wants to harm people and then a narrative of a shaman unable to cure a sick child: both shamans are powerful, but both also fail to achieve their goals.

What is noteworthy in this imagery is its connectedness to physical hygiene and references to the inferiority of life on the tundra in general. Soviet power was not only struggling against shamanism, but against backwardness in the North in every respect. This worked better than the earlier politics of the Church. The Nenets could continue living as they wished while on the tundra, beyond the reach of the rather ineffective tsarist administration. Hiding shamans or local religious practices from the annually visiting priests was relatively easy. The Soviets, however, brought a more efficient administration with them. They managed to convince some Nenets of a better life under their rule, and through the extensive schooling system, they were also able to teach their ideology to the children. As with other Soviet reforms and politics, the persecution of shamans also happened rather tacitly, through local level negotiations – at least after the Stalinist campaigns. Kolguev is an example of a rather peaceful process of modernization: there were no persecutions or repressions whatsoever on the island, although the atmosphere grew rather tense on occasion. However, shamans were also silenced on Kolguev, but interestingly the people are not willing to talk about how it happened. People were blackmailed by threats of prison, even death, but mostly with losing rights as a citizen, which again would not only harm the threatened individual him- or herself, but also his or her family. Eventually modernization, proceeding slowly but surely, obviated the shamans. For example, in 1966 Ljudmila Xomič wrote:

> There haven't been shamanistic séances on the tundra like those described above for a long time. We managed to meet an ex-shaman, I. I. Njaruj, a blind old man on Jamal [Peninsula] in 1953. [....] In recent years, I. I. Njaruj has not shamanized, but I heard that people often come to him 'for advice'. (Xomič 1966: 313.)

In the post-Soviet ethnography, shamanism has been described under the general narrative of "the last shaman". These are descriptions of the life of a shaman in the Soviet years and of his death soon after the ethnographer discovers him. These narratives usually tell about the sad fates of the descendants, who either buried the shamanistic tradition or tried to continue it. The narratives of continuation are typically stories about weak shamans – not real shamans – who continue the shamanistic tradition in cities as part of an ethnic revival and revitalization.[8]

The Image of the Last Shaman among Post-Soviet Nenets

Narratives of the last shaman live naturally among the Northern peoples themselves.[9] However, these can manifest diverse kinds of narratives which find their means of expression in local ways of telling. It is hard to say how much influence the Soviet literary figure of the last shaman has had on Kolguev Nenets narration: their dialect differs somewhat from the central Bol'šezemel'skaja dialect, which served as the basis for the written Nenets language, and as a consequence Kolguev Nenets do not generally read books in Nenets at all. Books have no doubt been read at school and the last shaman has certainly been a recurrent theme in atheistic and cultural campaigns, for example in plays that provided popular entertainment in the so-called red tents or cultural clubs. It is also noteworthy that many Nenets writers, such as Vasilij Ledkov mentioned above, wrote in Russian, which has made him more popular amongst the European Nenets at least. The figure must therefore have been familiar in Kolguev. The figure has probably also been rather attractive considering the overall tendency to keep shamans out of sight when outsiders were on the island as a means of concealing local practices from officials and outsiders who seldom visited the tundra and were otherwise ignorant of other forms of Nenets vernacular religiosity. As a matter of course, there were also shamans who were quieted or decided to abandon shamanic practice in Kolguev. A shaman's role is not easily abandoned, as the shaman never decided to be a shaman him- or herself, but was chosen by the spirits, performing duties both with the spirits and for them as well as for his own community. An ex-shaman has to silence the spirits – which rarely succeeds. He also has to violate his obligation to help people whenever they ask. Thus, local narration about last shamans repeats themes of economic, spiritual and health problems of the last shamans and their descendants. They also tell of places haunted by shamanic attributes. Xarjuči mentions that on the Gydan Peninsula, there are sacred places where abandoned sacred sledges contain family spirits and other spirits (Xarjuči 2001: 96, 146). Moreover, Xomič notes the son of a shaman who

gave his father's attributes away to the local museum (Xomič 1981: 22). These examples manifest processes of negotiation between the human and spirit communities within the possibilities of living available in the post-Soviet Russian North. Thus, although the shamans have withdrawn, many of the beliefs connected to the shamanistic worldview and broader religious context remain alive in the form of stories circulating in the Nenets community. The tellers and the listeners of these stories are acutely aware of the ethnographic texts and representations, as well as of shamans as literary figures. Both ethnographic and literary representations have impacted tellings in contemporary Bugrino.

Shamanistic Folklore and Folklore about Shamans

Narration about shamans is naturally connected to the earlier tradition in the community, to the traditions maintained by shamans through and in relation to the performance and transmission of their rituals and social roles – what I refer to as "shamanistic folklore", as opposed to "folklore about shamans". Toivo Lehtisalo has presented a broad range of Nenets shamanistic folklore both in his collection of folklore (Lehtisalo 1947) and in his monograph on Nenets mythology (Lehtisalo 1924). Lehtisalo's texts depict a thematic complex that spreads through most Nenets folklore genres. He represents both epic songs and narratives about shamans' initiations, as well as stories of the feats of past shamans, of their duels. In addition, there are narratives about contemporary shamans and their words and deeds. Lehtisalo also recorded shamanistic ritual singing, in which the shaman's journey through the otherworld that transpires during the performance of the ritual is described.[10] Kolguev islanders' circulating corpus of shamanistic folklore consists of epic and lyric singing, narratives and memorates. A typical example of narration describes two shamans meeting in the form of animals:

> Один шаман, Амгалев, решил пугнуть старушку, которая очень была ругачая. Он превратился в подземного хора (мамонта) ночью. А жена этого шамана говорит: страшно с тобой рядом спать; ты что-то ночью творишь, а я думала, ты рядом спишь; тело есть, а душа где-то бродит....
>
> Другой шаман, Проня, увидел во сне, что тот подземным хором пошел пугать старуху. И сам обернулся белым медведем и пошел ему навстречу. Но подземный хор долбанул этого медведя по шее. Когда утром они проснулись, у Прокопия сильно шея болела. И он пошел на поклон к тому шаману, чтобы тот его вылечил. Сказал: «очень сильно ты меня стукнул». А тот говорит: «Я ведь пошутил только. Шутя тебя по затылку ударил.» Они друзья были, жили в одном стойбище. (Golovanov 2002: 423.)
>
> One shaman, Amgalëv, decided to startle an old woman who nagged a lot. He turned into an underground *xor*[11] (a mammoth) in the night. The wife of this shaman says: It is frightful to sleep beside you; you are doing something at night and I thought you were sleeping beside me; the body is there, and the soul is wandering somewhere else....

> In a dream, another shaman, Pronja, saw him go to startle the old woman as an underground *xor*. He himself turned into a polar bear and went to meet him. But the underground *xor* hit this bear in the neck. When they woke up in the morning, Prokopij's neck really hurt. And he went to pay his respects to the shaman so that he would heal him. He said: 'You hit me really hard.' And the other says: 'But I was only fooling around. I smacked you in the neck as a prank.' They were friends, lived in the same camp.

This narrative brings out many typical features of the content of shamanistic folklore which is connected to the shamanic worldview in general.[12] The conception that a shaman may move in the form of an animal is related to the Nenets conception that every man has two souls. The one, the "breath", stays with the man until he or she dies,[13] the other, called the "shadow", is capable of moving independently of the body, for example during sleep. (Lehtisalo 1924: 115, Xomič 1976: 23.) With the aid of his or her helping-spirits, a shaman's shadow soul is capable of taking another form: thus a shaman may travel, for example, as a ferrous reindeer, white eagle, wolf, duck, pike, fire or fog – or as a polar bear or earth's bull (*xor*), as in the story above. The forms most often refer to the helping-spirits themselves: it is not the shaman him- or herself, but the helping-spirit who is referred to as the shaman. (Lehtisalo 1924: 159–160.) Signs which function as evidence or a consequence of wanderings in the otherworld – such as the ache in the neck in this story – are typical for shamanistic stories. Shamans could not be harmed except by other spirits or, for example, by an ignorant hunter who kills an animal only to discover afterwards that it was the spirit-animal of a shaman. (Castrén 1857: 180–182, Lehtisalo 1924: 73.) In these stories, the spirits are not given the form of whatever animal the teller happens to think of: the animal form is selected according to its capacities and their relevance for the shaman's journey in the otherworld. The animals are also representative of the power of the spirits, and thereby also of the power of the shaman. (Lar 1998: 38.)

The spirit figures also manifest themselves in other Nenets genres (predominantly in mythology), and they serve as a direct link between shamanism and the mythology. Accordingly, both the polar bear and the earth's bull belong to the group of powerful animal figures: in Nenets mythology, the world is populated by giants and their giant animals including the earth's bull and the polar bear. The mythic heroes travel with sledges that are harnessed to earth's bull or polar bears that belong to the spirits of the underworld which lend these animals to the hero so that he is able to fulfill his duties. The figure of this bull is connected to the giant bones of mammoths discovered and surfacing from beneath the earth in all Nenets habitation areas. To return back to the overview of Nenets folklore, it appears that epic song genres called *sjudbabc* and *jarabc* and mythological prose[14] do not treat the pursuits of the shamans as their main theme, although they concentrate on mythic heroes and mythic times (Kuprijanova 1965, Puškarëva 2000: 8–10, Puškarëva 2003). Nonetheless, separating shamanistic folklore from mythological texts is neither simple nor appropriate in every context. Andrei Golovnëv has remarked that it is hard to put a border between the celestial

and earthly paths in Nenets myths, as they seem so similar: the paths of men and gods intersect (Golovnëv 1995: 393). This is also true of shamanistic folklore. As Anna-Leena Siikala has observed:

> Shamanic knowledge is knowledge of the unknown, of the other world. In this respect it represents a special form of mythical knowledge. Indeed, shamanic narratives are reminiscent of mythical tales, not only in content but also in expression. The shamanic mode of thought thus represents that form of consciousness which diverges from the rational consciousness of everyday 'reality'. (Siikala 2002: 48.)

Folklore about Shamans

It is possible to separate contemporary narration *about* shamans from shamanistic folklore. Narratives about shamans concentrate on describing a shaman's deeds in the context of everyday life (as opposed to in shamanic modes of thought), and approach a shaman's actions from the point of view of a layman (as opposed to a specialist). Narratives about shamans settle in the ground between belief legends and memorates. It is important to notice that contemporary narration about shamans is not a deteriorated mode of shamanistic folklore, but rather a form of meta-narration that comments on the shamanistic institution (Urban 2001: 37–38; cf. Lar 1998: 41). Lehtisalo's material shows that this kind of meta-narration has been part of Nenets folklore since at least the beginning of the 20th century, and it no doubt already had a long history at that time.[15]

Defining narratives about shamans as meta-narration emphasizes their inherent interconnection to shamanistic folklore and tradition. Although they are told from a layman's perspective, from the perspective of one who does not have access to the spirit world, telling and interpreting the meta-narration requires some basic knowledge of the foundations of shamanistic beliefs, of a shaman's powers and abilities and his/her actions. This is to say that both shamanistic folklore and stories about shamans are part of the same, wider religious framework. The difference lies in the uneven distribution of shamanic or mythological knowledge: whereas shamans live in the world of spirits during their life and after death, laymen can access it as clients or an audience of the rituals or performances of mythic poetry. (Golovnëv 1995: 381.) The stories about shamans negotiate the shaman's abilities from the point of view of the community in which the shaman lives. They also situate the shaman him- or herself as part of that community, even if as a special person. These stories must also be common among other communities with shamans, because they serve as a vehicle for discussing how the shamans differ from each other. For example, there are stories about Khanty and Nganasan shamans (Koshkaryova 2005, Helimski 2005). Agnieszka E. Halemba (2006: 160), studying Telengit *biler ulus* ['people who know'] calls this type of talk gossip or just discussion.

The Nenets folklore is generally not very widely studied and the studies have concentrated mainly in epic genres and mythological prose (Kuprijanova 1965, Niemi 1998, Puškarëva 2000, 2003). Lately, individual

songs have also been studied whereas stories have not been studied or even collected systematically at all (Niemi & Lapsui 2004). Although folklorists have known about the existence of prose narration, in some cases it has even passed unmentioned when introducing Nenets folklore (Kuprijanova 1960: 17–18.) This has continued in spite of Zinaida Kuprijanova's attempts to direct interest towards "[t]he little stories, that apparently are very widely circulated amongst the people" (Kuprijanova 1965: 19). As already mentioned, Lehtisalo used stories as source material when writing about Nenets mythology. He primarily uses stories as credible sources and as a poetic device in his own narration, which implies that he has approached them not as folklore, but as evidence. (E.g. Lehtisalo 1924: 45, 58–63, 84.)

According to my own fieldwork conducted in Kolguev, it seems clear that stories are indeed very widely circulated amongst the Nenets: they represent a typical localized tradition that has its own crystallized themes and ways of telling. Moreover, it is easily and voluntarily translated into Russian if and when there are people not fluent in Nenets present. These narratives are called stories (Russian предание or рассказ; Nenets иле"мя).[16] The stories are not naturally distinguished from other ways of speaking: they borrow elements of content and structure from other genres and ways of speaking. When considering belief legends, they are also told in the same religious frameworks as other religious folklore. The tellers are thus building connections to shamanistic folklore and the broader shamanistic tradition and beliefs. Accordingly, I regard stories about shamans to be situated in a "multidimensional web of interrelationships that link performed texts to culturally defined systems of meaning and interpretation and to socially organized systems of social relations" (Bauman 2004: 32). I therefore regard the shaman as a particular theme in a larger body of storytelling in Kolguev.

Stories about shamans are mainly belief legends or memorates which have a relationship to shamanic folklore and mythology, but which also draw on the broader image – or rather images – of a shaman in the community. These images, as shown above, do not circulate in oral forms only, but also live in Soviet and post-Soviet texts. Richard Bauman has used the term "traditionalization" to describe the tendency of the narrator to situate his/her speech in a web or chain of past narrations. Narrators construct the connections actively in their narration, for example to authenticate their narration or endow their story with personal and social meanings. (Bauman 2004: 27–28.) But it is also possible to proceed vice versa, widening the gap between the immediate and past narrations with their cultural and social meanings. This is also a device applied for contextualization, building arenas for other kinds of meanings. (Briggs & Bauman 1992: 149.) Briggs and Bauman call this minimizing or maximizing the intertextual gap, highlighting cultural and ideological meanings created by these processes. The intertextual relations can be constructed on many levels through all of the possibilities which oral performance has to offer. (Briggs & Bauman 1992: 159–163.)

The examples used in this article were all originally told in Russian, through which the tellers have already widened the intertextual gap somewhat in relation to the shamanistic tradition which is characterized by narratives in Tundra Nenets. I therefore concentrate on features of narrative

content which are employed to create intertextual relations to shamanistic traditions. My emphasis is on the comprehensive Taleworlds created by the narrator in his telling:

> The Taleworld has its own space-time horizon, experienced as such by its inhabitants and not experienced in the same way by hearers and tellers. It is bodily or otherwise intersubjectively inhabited by its characters who are present to each other according to the Taleworld's metaphysical conventions. Characters act; they are geared into the Taleworld as into a reality which demands their responses and responds to their demands. The inhabitants of the Taleworld, then, experience a commensurate sense of themselves as ordinary, typical, or appropriate beings in their realm: winged as angels, disembodied as ghosts, evil as demons. (Young 1987: 16.)

A narrator can orient his/her Taleworld to shamanistic metaphysical conventions creating intertextual relations to shamanistic beliefs and the shamanistic tradition, or s/he can orient a story about shamans to the metaphysical conventions closer to the event of the telling itself, what Young calls the "Storyrealm". Shamanistic Taleworlds are usually close to mythic worlds, but they may as well be everyday realms, in which shamanistic metaphysical conventions as a whole might be called into question. This is a powerful tool for creating meanings in telling. To show how intertextual gaps are used and how Taleworlds are created, two stories about the death of the shaman Amgalëv in Kolguev will be presented.

The Death of Amgalëv I

The Kolguev Nenets are generally in agreement that Amgalëv was the last shaman of their island. Amgalëv is the Nenets name of a man who was killed in the late 1920s. He is buried on a hill in the northern parts of Kolguev, near a road to the village of Severnyj (a military base founded in the early Soviet years). In November of 2000, an elderly man told me a story about the fate of Amgalëv in an interview while telling me about this hill:

> Все вот, после революции это был опять, не так давно. Только там этот был, один шаман, последный шаман, его говорили. Этот Винукан, этот Амглё, его звали. Тоже шаманом был, а потом нем, тоже один опять. Там уже маяк был Северный, люди работать. Один мужик, все время капканы ставил, а попал у него, у мужика-то русского, у него попал, этот, голубой песец. А тот ехал и видел и голубой песец, так находил пока ехал и вывел из капкана песца, у него украл. А тот, мужик-то кажется, тоже русский мужик обладал колдоство очень хорошо. Его заколдовал, он сумашедший стал, сумашедшим стал, так и ехал и. В начала так, оттуда ехал так, рассказал что, кто у меня украл песца, все-равно я найду-у и будет наказанно наве-, наве-, навесь наказанно будет. А потом он туда, пока он в себе чум ехал и там этот, совик нашел на дороге. Совик, пустой совик, кто-то потерял, зимный, из оленой шкуры сделан. Он тут постанавился,

схватила, а тот-то окажется чудишем был. Чудишем превратился, он сумашедший стал. Тот мужик-то русский, вообщем колдовал наверно, сколдовал его. И он сумашедшим стал. Потом говорили там, один человек резко сумаше- резким стал. Тот, тот, те опять где у них стойбище тоже люди были, говорят, шаману обратитесь, Амгалёву, Амгалёв. Может, чего-нибудь найдет, может, вот, вообщем, вылечить от этого, от колдоства-то. Он при-приехал туда, этот Амгалёв-то. А, он сказал, ра-, туда сошел, ему в чум который сумашедшим. Сумашедший сидел в чуме. Говорит, ты, ты окажется украл у человека песца. Он видит это тоже, шаман видит, ты украл песца голубого. Почему украл-то? Нельзя воровать так. А тот, кто сумашедший стал, стал и на него напал, напал и у него вообщем ножны схватил, за ножны схватил этого постаревшего шамана, подавил его и, или семь ран, говорят, семь ножовых ран на нож. На седмого, -ого, ударил, убил этого старика. Говорит-то до-олго видь, то опять проткнет, то опять станет, так и он убил этого шамана последнего, Амгалёва. Мужик-то, говорят, хороший был, этот шаман слабинкий был а, все-равно он хотел вылечить его. Не выш-, не вышло, убил он шамана этот сумашедший. (MI03112000:2.)

Well then, it happened after the Revolution, not such a long time ago. So there was a shaman, the last shaman, so he was called. That was a Vinukan.[17] That one was Amglë, so he was called. In addition, he was a shaman and another [man] again [killed] him. There was a lighthouse, Severnyj; people were working. One man always set traps, he caught, this Russian man caught a polar fox. And another [man] was driving along and saw the polar fox and so he took it out of the trap, stole from him. And the man, the Russian man, it seems, also had very good skills in sorcery. He [the Russian man] bewitched him [the thief] and he lost his mind. At first, he came from [the trap] and said, 'whoever stole the polar fox from me, one way or another, I will find him and he will be punished, he will be punished completely.' And then he [the thief] was on his way to his conical tent and found a *sovik* [a man's winter garment] on the road. A *sovik*, an empty *sovik* which someone had lost, a winter *sovik* made from reindeer skin. He stopped and grabbed it, and it seems that it was an evil spirit. It turned into an evil spirit and he lost his mind. This Russian man seems to have cursed him and he [the thief] lost his mind. Then it was said that someone suddenly lost his mind. And in the camp, people said he should go see the shaman Amgalëv, Amgalëv. Maybe he could find something, maybe he could cure him of it, of the curse. He went there, this Amgalëv. And he said, he went to the conical tent of the madman. The madman sat in his conical tent. [The shaman] says: 'You, it seems, you stole a polar fox from a man.' He also sees it, the shaman sees that you stole a polar fox. 'Why did you steal? One shouldn't steal like that.' And the one who lost his mind stood up and attacked him, attacked and grabbed the sheath [and knife], grabbed the sheath of the aged shaman. He pushed him down and seven wounds, it is said, that he struck seven wounds with the knife, with the seventh he struck and killed this old man. They say that [this lasts] for a long time: he stabs again, and stands up again, and in this way he killed that last shaman, Amgalëv. They say he was a good man, that he was a weakish shaman, but he wanted to cure him anyway. It came to naught. He killed the shaman, this madman.

The teller, proceeding relatively chronologically in his telling, first presents the shaman and his fate as well as noting the broader context of the story: the military base with its non-native islanders. He emphasizes the recent time and familiar places of the events and brings out the shaman Amgalëv as a mortal being, giving his surname (Vinukan). The teller then begins a story that is not totally unambiguously interpreted. In my interpretation, there are a Nenets and a Russian man quarrelling. The Nenets stole a polar fox from the Russian's trap. This Russian, who was also a witch, became angry and set out a *sovik* (a man's winter garment) made of reindeer skin on the tundra. The thief of the polar fox decided to take the *sovik* as well. This is also considered a theft, as one is not supposed to touch or use others' items on the tundra. When he grabbed the *sovik,* it transformed into an evil spirit-being. The man was frightened and went mad.[18] The Nenets living in the same camp with him wanted to help him and advised him to contact Amgalëv. As the thief did not come to the shaman himself, Amgalëv decided to go to him. Amgalëv saw immediately that the man had stolen a polar fox and scolded him for it. The thief stood up and killed the shaman with his own knife, stabbing him seven times. In conclusion, the teller describes the stabbed shaman as a good man, but a weak shaman who was killed because of his good will. Hence the end, or, if you like, the coda of the narrative, comes back to the person of the shaman and sets the narrative in an everyday context of the community. This again, builds up the credibility of the narrative and creates the mode of an eye-witnessing or testimony.

Within his meta-comments, the teller creates a shamanistic Taleworld using morality as a primary instigator of events. The Nenets man transgressed against Nenets moral codes twice. First, he stole a polar fox from a trap, which violates codes of hunting: one should not steal another's catch nor touch another's traps in particular. Whereas reindeer may be herded collectively by the inhabitants of the same camp and some animals are also hunted collectively, traps are always the private property of a particular hunter. The man transgressed the moral code a second time when he took the *sovik* lying along his way. There is a norm according to which one should leave the objects, storage sledges, granaries and huts untouched. The practice is based both on religious caution – e.g. old individual burial places are not so easily recognized, but they might contain useful items – and also on conceptions of property. Nomadic Nenets store their clothes, food and other useful items in storage sledges that are situated at crossroads along their migration routes. Losing these items, especially precious winter clothes and covers for conical tents, might be the end of autonomous life on the tundra for a family that would not have enough reindeer to sew new clothes and tent covers. Naturally, it is also important for a migrating family to be able to ration its food appropriately and to be able trust that stored food is out there waiting.[19] In stories, a punishment normally follows a transgression against these norms. The Nenets man in this story is not punished directly, but by the Russian witch who set an evil spirit disguised as a *sovik* onto the tundra. Thus, the story is not about only the moral, but about the vengeance of the Russian witch who seems to have the same kinds of abilities as Nenets shamans. The man loses his mind confronting a supernormal being. This

theme is repeated in Nenets belief legends and reflects the belief that commoners are not strong enough to communicate with the otherworld. (Cf. Castrén 1853: 124, 191–193, Lehtisalo 1924: 59–60.) This is once again connected to shamanistic modes of thinking about the souls of man: as Lehtisalo mentions, a man either gets sick or loses his mind if s/he loses his/her shadow soul. A spirit or shaman can harm people by stealing their souls, but another shaman can also get a soul back presuming s/he can determine how the soul was lost in the first place. (Lehtisalo 1924: 116–124.) The story therefore sets the death of the last shaman in the shamanistic Taleworld from the very outset, framing the encounter of the shaman and his killer as a curing event. Note that the intertextual relations to shamanistic traditions are not made explicitly, but are rather constituent factors of the Taleworld.

The killing itself is also set in the shamanistic context at the threshold of the mythology and the Taleworld. Shamans have knowledge of the underworld and the fates of the people in his/her own community (Lehtisalo 1924: 165). Initiation narratives describe shamans being dissected into parts by the spirits,[20] and Mihaly Hoppál (1996) has interpreted these narratives as metaphors of death that give a shaman the ability to move between life and death in ritual situations. Toivo Lehtisalo (1924: 165) has noted that the Nenets believe that "one cannot kill a strong shaman with conventional means" because of his/her knowledge of the origins and the structure of the world. It is noteworthy that there are episodes in Nenets epic songs describing the special devices needed to kill a shaman (e.g. Kuprijanova 1965: 168, 172–173, 606). Nenets shamans would cut themselves during healing rituals, making the knife of a shaman a special ritual item. In the *sjudbabc* called *Jabta salja' erv* (Ябта Саля' Ерв) ['The Master of the Narrow Cape'], the hero kills his enemy, a very strong shaman, with a knife stolen from another shaman, and the dying enemy declares: "I do not get wounds from a normal knife, but I did from this one. It seems that you carry a knife that does not obey sorcery." (От простого ножа я перенесу рану, а от этого ножа не перенесу. Ты, оказывается, носишь нож, который не поддается колдовству.) (Kuprijanova 1965: 173.) Amgalëv was killed with his own knife, the knife that he had used in rituals, and the knife which could harm a shaman. The theme of the shaman's knife is thus a highly conscious construction of a shamanistic Taleworld that corresponds to the mythical Taleworlds: the gaps are minimized. The death is also connected to the number seven, which is a repeated symbolic number in Nenets mythology and shamanism. The madman struck the shaman seven times during which the shaman rose up and then fell back again. Seven describes both the duration of the struggle and also connects the death of the last shaman to a mythological context. The teller does this in spite of the impression of Amgalëv as a weakish shaman. He does it to build up a consistent and credible shamanistic Taleworld.

Clearly, then this story of the last shaman is a story set in a shamanistic context. It was told to me, an ethnographer who came and said she was interested in past shamans (among other things). It was told by a man who was a master narrator but also clearly interested in religious themes. I could say that his "narrative grasp" (Siikala 1990, 125) was religious.

The man, speaking to the minidisc recorder and the ethnographer, told a traditionalized story about the shaman, weaving the death and the killing into a shamanistic Taleworld with subtle thematic references to the mythology and to shamanism.

The Death of Amgalëv II

Vasilij Golovanov is a Russian journalist from Moscow who has visited Kolguev many times. The chapter "The Son of the Shaman" appears in his book *Ostrov* ['The Island'], where he describes the life of the son of Amgalëv. Golovanov begins this chapter by telling about Amgalëv in a way that diverges considerably of the version above:

> В двадцать седьмом году отца его убил человек из другого рода. Семь раз ударил ножом и на седьмой – зарезал и заревел от радости торжества. Того человека подговорили люди из Города. Их прислали, чтобы организовывать людей тундры на заготовку нерпичьих шкур и оленьего мяса. Его отец, последный шаман Острова, сторонился их, но был все же замечен.
>
> Это были веселые, крепкие люди. Они вели себя на Острове как хозяева, только немного скучали и от скуки пили спирт и как-то раз от скуки напоили слабоумного и сказали: «Зарежь его. Если он и вправду шаман, то он не умрет. Испробуй, на что он годен». И тот пошел, ибо был слабоумен и пьян. И нашел шамана в чужом чуме камлающим у ложа больной женщины. И убил.
>
> Женщина, от которой ушел ее голос, осталась немой навсегда, ибо шаман не завершил свое дело. (Golovanov 2002: 312.)

> In [19]27, a man from another kin-group killed his father. He struck seven times with a knife, killed him with the seventh blow, and screamed with the joy of his triumph. People from the City [of Nar'jan-Mar] persuaded this man to do this. They were sent to organize people from the tundra to store seal skins and reindeer meat. His father, the last shaman of the Island, avoided them but got noticed anyway.
>
> They were cheerful and strong people. They acted like the masters of the island and they were a little bored and drank hard liquor. And then once, because they were bored, they got a feebleminded man drunk and said: 'Stab him to death. If he's a real shaman, he will not die. See what he's capable of.' And he did, because he was feebleminded and drunk. He found the shaman in a séance at the bedside of a sick woman in a foreign conical tent. And he killed.
>
> The woman, who had lost her voice, remained mute for the rest of her life because the shaman did not finish what he was doing.

This story was presumably told by the son of Amgalëv and later edited by Golovanov. It represents the same context as the story above: the early Soviet years and the outsiders who had come to the island to "master" the economy. Accordingly, the overall framework of both stories emphasizes

that the killing was brought on by outsiders – by Russians. Moreover, the killer was mentally ill, although Nenets. The circulating narrative of the death of Kolguev's last shaman hence implies that a normal local person would not kill a shaman.

This story makes several references to the same kind of shamanistic Taleworld created in the first account, but the narrator does not orient this story wholly to this world. The belief that one cannot kill a shaman by conventional means and the number seven come up in this story. In the end, the stories set the killing in very different kinds of contexts. In Golovanov's story, the plot proceeds relatively straightforwardly: an outsider who was both feebleminded and drunk ran to kill a shaman on a dare from his fellow Russians. The shaman was killed in the middle of a healing séance, and thus the woman being healed remained mute. There are differences between the stories even in the murder itself. At the beginning of the story presented by Golovanov, it is observed that the killer screamed in his excitement. This emphasizes the nature of the man: he was feebleminded and drunk. More meaningful however is the difference in the context of the killing. In Golovanov's story, the shaman is in the middle of a healing séance and the killer surprises him. This emphasizes disrespect towards shamanistic traditions and highlights the end of the era of shamans. Disturbing a shamanistic séance was socially unacceptable, as, according to the tradition, the shaman would be possessed by the spirits, journeying in unknown worlds and helping his community. Thus the shaman would not only be unconscious and unable to defend himself, but also beyond his own community, immediately connected to the otherworld and its hazardous powers.

It is difficult to find a counterpart for this scene in Nenets narration, whereas the violent struggles of shamans or epic heroes are common in shamanic folklore and mythology. The shamanistic context is almost totally missing in the story presented by Golovanov, where the shaman is murdered more or less for fun, or because the men were bored and drunk. Conversely, it is easy to set it in the Soviet Taleworld as it ridicules the shaman who is not strong enough to survive the stabbings. Golovanov does not tell who told him the story or how much he edited it, making it impossible to uncontroversially judge why there are such significant differences in the two accounts. Nevertheless it is clear that the first version is set in the context of Nenets shamanism and its modes of thought while the second reflects Soviet or Russian perspectives.

The End of Shamanism

But where does this leave the second story? Its intertextual gaps vis-à-vis shamanistic folklore are so wide that it is even possible to interpret it as an unsuccessful attempt to tell a Nenets story about a shaman. However, according to Golovanov, it is a story told by a Nenets. The key to understanding the difference between the two stories lies in the teller: he was the son of Amgalëv. For him, the death of his father was a personal loss

of a member of the family. He was not the only one in Kolguev, and although I have never met him, I can imagine the painful silence around this subject in his family. As mentioned in the beginning of this article, the theme of the "last shaman" stands almost completely outside of communication. (See also Vitebsky 2005: 101–102, 325.) Golovanov continues his story about the son of the last shaman, telling that the murdered shaman was never able to teach his son, who was left perplexed by his shamanic abilities. In other words, he did not only lose a father, but also the continuity of a tradition which he should have carried to the next generation. He only once performed a shamanic séance to heal his neighbour, and the vision he had during the séance – again, probably somewhat edited by Golovanov – serves as key to his story of the last shaman:

> Он многое повидал. Он видел, как со временем распались связи неведемого, грубо оборванные людьми, и мир перекосился, лишившись невидимых подвесок. Люди на Острове перестали резать оленей и вместо этого, пьяные, стали убивать их, разбивая головы ломом. Люди разучились жить налегке и потеряли выносливость и ясную мудрость волка-охотника, стали злыми и ненасытными как псы и как псы ленивы и послушны. И полюбили водку больше скучной праздной жизни своей, которая давно, когда еще был жив его отец, была так трудна, но так прекрасна. (Golovanov 2002, 314.)

> He saw many things. He saw how, in the course of time, the connections with the unknown were stripped away and how the world became distorted when the unseen supports were lost. The people on the island stopped slaughtering reindeer, and instead they began killing them when they were drunk, smashing their heads with a crowbar. People forgot how to live light and lost their toughness and the crisp wisdom of the hunter-wolf. They became wicked and voracious like dogs – and like dogs they became lazy and submissive. And they started to love vodka more than their unexciting, slothful life that, a long time ago, when his father was still alive, was so hard, yet so beautiful.

This apocalyptic vision flattens any negative descriptions of Bugrino or other native settlements of the North. It is a desolate image of a community that has lost its sense of pride and dignity, its ability to live according to the standards of traditional, nomadic Nenets society, and has begun violating its moral code. It is near the texts in the local newspapers after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which give a depressing impression of the "national settlements" – meaning the little villages built during the Soviet period for nomadic, indigenous people.[21] It also comes close to the descriptions which the ethnographers and the natives themselves have given in their books and in the meetings of native northerners (Pika & Proxorov 1988, Sjezdjasa 2004). All these can be seen in the context of late and post-Soviet discourse of *polnaja razruha* ['complete disintegration']. The stories of complete disintegration "helped to fabricate a sense of shared experience and destiny" and a "proof that the Soviet Union was collapsing into chaos and anarchy." (Ries 1997: 46–47.) Nancy Ries discusses the complete disintegration

amongst the cultural intelligentsia of Moscow during perestroika, but the same discourse can be detected in the Russian North and Siberia. In the North, the discourse of "complete disintegration" is not only connected to the collapse of the Soviet Union, but also to the collapse of the system that underpinned the economic and ideological structures in the Northern settlements. As Piers Vitebsky (2005: 181) notes, it is also connected to the hopelessness people feel when trying to think about the future of their culture and language. This comes out as both pessimistic notions of being extinct and ironic statements of Tundra Nenets being a useless language. As noted in the beginning of this article, the local media accelerate this discourse by continuously describing Nenets as jobless alcoholics, and even Počečikin's (31.07.2004, 04.08.2004, 07.08.2004) newspaper articles, which provided our point of departure, concentrate primarily on the alcohol problem in Bugrino.

All in all, this discourse of hopelessness should be set against the historical background of displacing Nenets from the tundra of Kolguev to the settlement of Bugrino. This was part of the battle against their backwardness, and in the settlement, shamanistic practices were eventually lost. Many other cultural practices were forgotten as well. Moreover, northern Soviet settlements never offered realistic possibilities for everyone to find a meaningful way of living. The apocalyptic vision must be interpreted within this historical process of displacement and accompanying sense of futurelessness. It describes, from the perspective of a shamanistic culture, why life in the North became so hard: the people lost their connections to the spirits which support the world. The following imagery describes some of the most painful moments of the disintegration sensed by indigenous Nenets: the slaughtering of reindeer is more and more often realized according to non-traditional ways, people accumulate large (rather than minimal and mobile) goods and lose their toughness – toughness being considered characteristic of people on the tundra. All in all, the description longs for a nostalgically presented past.

The story of the death of Amgalëv told by his son becomes understandable when this vision and the sense of futurelessness are kept in mind. It is both a story of a personal break from traditions, from the spirits, and insofar as Amgalëv is said to be the last shaman of Kolguev, the story is also about the whole community's break from its spirits. The wide intertextual gap which the son generates in his telling emphasizes this break: it is spiritual, but also textual. The teller cannot orient his story in the shamanistic Taleworld because the death of his father meant the discontinuation of the shamanistic tradition.

Narrating Amgalëv, the Last Shaman

It is important to observe that the story presented first in this article also comments on modernization: the meta-narration sets the whole story in the context of the first Soviet decades with its military base. Accordingly, both of the stories presented here should be interpreted in a post-Soviet context, where one should be wary about talking about religion. Shamans

are voluntarily hidden behind the story of a last shaman, although the story itself may be told in different ways according to the position a particular teller takes towards shamanism. In the first story, the teller creates a consistent shamanistic Taleworld, where the shaman acts and gets killed according to the principles of that world. The teller minimizes the gaps between the narrative and the shamanistic tradition when creating the Taleworld. He also skillfully begins and ends his memorate with references to the event of narration itself, which guide the listener to the Taleworld and lead him/her back again. The memorate becomes a probative story of the last shaman being killed as a shaman. In the second story, the shaman is killed almost accidentally, just for fun or to be ridiculed. The story makes references to shamanistic beliefs, but is not founded on them. Quite the opposite, the story is constructed to show that shamanistic beliefs are not right or worth believing. The Taleworld is reminiscent of the propagandist Soviet empire. The pessimistic shamanic vision of the son of the last shaman creates an apocalyptic image of Nenets society which is the complete opposite of the nostalgic imaginings of the past nomadic society. It engages in an intertextual space with both the local newspaper texts and the ethnographic descriptions about life in post-Soviet Northern national settlements, where life is "unbearable torment". However, the vision also comments on the break with the tradition: the Nenets community is in crisis – who upholds connections with the otherworld when the shamans have been lost? Shamans, irrespective of whether they are the "last", would be needed in exactly these crisis situations.

NOTES

1 E.g. Islavin 1847: 110–114, Šrenk 1855: 349–356, Castrén 1852: 198–207, Lehtisalo 1956: xxxvii–xxxix.

2 Vasil'ev 1982: 64, Davydov, Mikhajlova & Kokorin 2006: 355–356, Davydov 2006: 36–44.

3 Mikola is a Nenets name for Nikolai the Miracle-worker, who became part of Nenets vernacular religion at an early stage. See e.g. Lehtisalo 1924: 31–33, Vallikivi 2003: 120–123.

4 GAAO 29/ 2t.6/132; 29/2t.6/450: 15, MI/ 03112000, MII/12042004, Perfil'ev 1928, 7, Siikala 1978 [1987]: 203–204.

5 *Kulak* was the word used for the exploiters of the people who were to be extinguished by the Soviet power. In the North, these were primarily identified as rich herders, traders and shamans.

6 A Nenets written language was created in the 1920s using the Latin alphabet. This was already replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet in 1937. See e.g. Toulouze 1990.

7 Recently deceased, Ledkov was highly respected and widely read by the European Nenets. He is also noteworthy because he has translated *Kalevala* (presumably from Russian) into Tundra Nenets. Extracts of translations have been published in the local newspaper. See Ledkov 1995.

8 E.g. Xomič 1981: 11n.20, Pentikäinen 1998, Humphrey 1999, Helimski 2005, Koshkaryova 2005, Vitebsky 2005: 101–102, 199–200, 231–235, 386–390, Halemba 2006, Bulgakova 2009. It must be admitted, however, that there are considerable

differences in the modes of telling these narratives in ethnographic literature. Some do not want to consider any continuation in the tradition, while others see more tenacity and thus also write in a more positive tone.

9 Piers Vitebsky presents a startling example amongst the Evens of central Siberia. A drama was presented annually at the spring festival of the school, in which the killing of a shaman by a communist was represented. This was only stopped when the villagers saw the drama in a documentary film, where it was represented as a shared story of all the persecuted and their descendants. (Vitebsky 2005: 232–233.) This is an example of a Soviet narrative that found its way into the official local life of the community, through which it reached most of the villagers.

10 E.g. Lehtisalo 1924: 16, 35–39, 44–48, 120–121, 137, 167–170, Lehtisalo 1947: 147–213, 469–550.

11 *Xora* is a Tundra Nenets word for a 'reindeer bull'. The expression *ja' xora* [literally 'Earth's bull' or 'underground bull'] means a mammoth, a draught animal of mythological beings. (Lehtisalo 1956: 87.)

12 Anna-Leena Siikala has characterized the basic features of shamanistic folk models and belief worlds. These include "the notion of a special relationship between the shaman and his spirit helpers, and the ecstatic technique based on the public enactment of this relationship, as well as the shaman's capacity for metamorphosis. They also include the public shamanic sessions which are shaped by the interaction between the shaman and his helper, the audience, and the representatives of the supernatural world." (Siikala 2002: 57.)

13 In addition to breath, life and heath are connected to the conceptions of blood, the mind and the heart (Xomič 1976: 25).

14 Elena G. Puškarëva (2003) has recently examined Nenets prose and organized it according to the AT type-system. Puškarëva has organized tales that informants have referred to in Tundra Nenets as *laxanako* or *xèbidja laxanako*, where *xèbidja* means 'sacred'. Most of these deal with mythological themes, which is why Puškarëva uses the Russian term *mif-skazka* ['myth-fairy tale'] for the genre. (Puškarëva 2003: 10–15.) The confusion which arises in basic terms for the genre(s) is indicative of problems with genre typologies generally, and with applying (inappropriate) conventionalized models employed in research to the emic genre system of the Nenets in particular.

15 Lehtisalo 1924: 123, 137, 158; see also Xomič's (1981) examples of stories about shamans.

16 Puškarëva (2001: 23) mentions several genres that could correspond to "story": *talere"mja*, *sèv' talere"mja* ['stories about disappearance'], *judero"ma* ['story about a dream'], *va"al* ['story'], *ile"mja* ['story, biographical story'].

17 Vinukan is the surname of the shaman.

18 Another possible way to interpret this is that the sorcerer himself transformed into the *sovik* as the expression *a tot-to okažetsja čudišem byl. Čudišem prevatilsja* (а тот-то окажется чудишем был. Чудишем превратился) could also be interpreted: "And it seems that it was a witch, became a witch." However, it seems more plausible to me that the man was frightened by a spirit-being, which is a common motif in Nenets narration and epic, although a witch could also transform into a *sovik*.

19 Both polar bears looking for food and other people have stolen stores on the tundra. More recently, the employees of oil and gas industries are accused of stealing Nenets property on the tundra. (Xarjuči 2001: 29.)

20 See Siikala (2002: 66–69) for thorough analysis of a Nenets narrative.

21 E.g. Vladimirova 2003, Degteva 2002, Tribuna 2004. These kinds of negative descriptions were not possible in Soviet years. Soviet papers reproduce only bright pictures of Northern settlements.

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Arno Survo

The Mythology of a "Forgotten" Text*

It is difficult to find topics that have been subject to more research than "Ingria" and "research questions associated with Ingria" in either academic or popular scientific discourses, discourses which unite Finnish and Russian language spaces. There is something exceptionally precious, something of an almost religious character in this triviality, something which conceals the lacunae of rips in the canvas of discourse – that potential of sense in the nonsense of abstraction, to use the words of M. M. Bakhtin (1979: 350).

"Ingrian" topics are intimately bound up with myths of censorship as an exceptional phenomenon of Soviet reality, as though this explains the paucity of research on Ingria. This is echoed in the widely encountered supposition that there are insufficient materials available for research. Beginning with A. J. Sjögren, Finnish researchers have been interested in different aspects of local traditions for nearly two hundred years. There were no fewer opportunities available to representatives of Russian language science. Above all, the problem of the "paucity of research" on Ingria is language-boundedness. Quite simply, the majority of studies on this ethno-cultural region are by Finnish researchers in the Finnish language on the basis of archived materials. In their own way, translations of some Finnish studies and popular scientific works into Russian in the 1990s expanded the conceptions of Russian readers concerning the cultural-ideological tendencies of their closest neighbours. Nonetheless, there remains a brilliant spectrum of ideological discourses "in the wings"; discourses which are not for the popular reader, yet which contextualize "Ingrian" and, more broadly, Finno-Ugric topics.

In the post-Soviet period, general opportunities for contact in academic fields were not opened exclusively to foreign researchers studying traditions in Russia, hence it would be logical to suppose that Russian researchers would have no less interest in accessing the realities of foreign countries. No small number of representatives of various fields of the humanities came and went from Finland, but journeys constrained to visiting university campuses,

* This is a revised and expanded version of an article which appeared in Finnish under the title "Kertomus Tuutarista sekä yleisestikin koko Inkeristä. Kentän auktoriteetin ongelma" (Survo 2004).

libraries and archives were probably not inspiring for field observations. Subject–object relationships were still maintained in which Russian space held a role as a field of research. A contemporary of Finnish collectors of runo-poetry, L. N. Majkov, pointed out that many academic publications in German, Swedish and Finnish were not made use of in Russian research. At the same time, authors of the former studies remained generally ignorant of Russian publications. (Majkov 1877: 265.) Even after more than a century, the language barrier is still sincerely declared as an academic excuse.

Clichés and stereotypes are tightly interwoven, generating illusions of what has been studied, what remains unstudied, and what subjects may be prohibited. Indeed, research on Ingria was and still is extremely popular in Finnish academia, and the more constrained this subject was in the Soviet Union, the more fertile it proved in the academic and popular scientific writings of foreign authors. However, as with censorship, the picture of this situation has been turned upside-down: this foreign research was in principle no different from its Soviet counterpart. There is not much difference between the (imagined) prohibitions of censorship and that which was permissible abroad, as the latter often had the character of a propagandistic construct. The role of actual censorship, which varied in degree across different periods of Soviet history, was not so self-evident. In the end, the researcher him- or herself could choose between approved topics and unpopular subjects. "Manuscripts don't burn."[1] If, during the Soviet era, "Ingria" as a topic had been truly significant among researchers, then a number of studies, which it had not been possible to make available to the people of that era, would be appearing in print in the present day. However, nothing of the sort has been observed. We more often encounter the repetition of widespread clichés, but now with variants appearing in Russian. "In the patriarchal dump of old concepts, used images and polite words..." (Letov 1994).

The concept of "forgotten" text refers us back to Yuri M. Lotman's works dedicated to the study of the structure of semiotic fields. An individual from this or another culture realizes behaviour which is dictated by certain norms. That which stands outside of these norms does not matter, is irrelevant, or does not exist, even if in practice it is present in that culture. The worldview thus constructed would be perceived as a reality, by both contemporaries and subsequent generations who form their conceptions of the past on the basis of these kinds of texts. When whole layers of marginal cultural phenomena – marginal from the perspective of this meta-structure – do not correlate at all with the idealized picture, they are identified as "non-existent". If a researcher attempts to understand the past, and yet does not believe in the established stereotypes, then he or she collides with "forgotten" texts. As a consequence, many researchers became exceptionally fond of writing articles with titles like "An Unknown Poet of the Twelfth Century", "Concerning One More Forgotten Author of the Age of Enlightenment", etc., beginning in the works of the Cultural-Historical School. In other words, a semiotic unification was taking place on the meta-level of culture, accompanied by an ebullient abundance of tendencies on the level of described semiotic "reality" (Lotman 1992).

The periphery of "forgotten" texts presents an adaptive environment which promotes the intersection of the plane of expression and the plane of content of culturological texts. An understanding of the reasons why precisely those fragments of a "field" – in written form or iconic images – were fixed on, presents the possibility of understanding the internal logic of a scientific mythology, which has helped to form the scientific identity of researchers and develops the bonds between researchers and the history of this or that discipline. Texts formally fall into a diachronic hierarchy, yet on the plane of content, they synchronically co-exist in fields of meaning, affirming the justifiability of conventional explanation models, partly confronting them or manifesting alternative, rejected, potential interpretations.

A descriptive account of a local area entitled *Vanha Tuutari* ['Old Tuutari'], published by Sulo Haltsonen in 1967, can provide a concrete example. This text proved sufficiently unknown in the present day that when I published an article on it in *Kenttäkysymyksiä* in 2004 (Survo 2004), the editors of this collection decided to republish Haltsonen's text. Sulo Haltsonen searched for this manuscript in Finnish archives for more than ten years. In 1956, he found it unexpectedly in Leningrad, in the archive of the Russian Academy of Science, in A. J. Sjögren's Ingrica collection: "At some point, Sjögren probably received this manuscript from his friend, the Reverend Finnander, vicar of Tuutari, and used it as a resource in his work, and it had been among his manuscripts since that time" (Haltsonen 1967: 9).

The author of this descriptive account was presumably Johan Thalus (pre-1750–1825), cantor in the Tuutari parish from 1767–1805. Some addenda may have been made in 1810–1828 by the Reverend H. V. Bock (1776–1828), who was vicar of the parish across those years. The text was based on a Swedish questionnaire translated into Finnish. The questionnaire was used in Finland in the collection of information about local areas. The Swedish version was published in Turku (Finland), in the newspaper *Tidningar Utgifne af et sällskap i Åbo*, in 1782. The questionnaire may have been prepared by H. G. Porthan and it may have been modelled on the St. Petersburg publication, "Entwurf einer von der kayserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in St. Petersburg unternommenen allgemeinen topographisch-physischen Beschreibung des Russischen Reichs" (*St. Peterburgisches Journal*, November 1778). Sulo Haltsonen (1967: 7) suggested that H. V. Bock, who, when he was studying, acted as a "scientific intermediary" for Porthan, may have translated the Swedish language questionnaire into Finnish.

The manuscript was organized in four sections, variously describing political administration, geography, economy and history. The author (or authors) present multifaceted information about Tuutari, and the broad historical, ethnographic and linguistic material also related to other parishes. In appendices, Sulo Haltsonen provides lists of the rarest dialectal terms that appear in the text, among which there are primarily loanwords from Russian, as well as some from Swedish, and also personal and local names.

The description of Tuutari could have been published as early as the mid-19th century. D. E. D. Europaeus became familiar with this text on his

1848 fieldwork expedition and encouraged its publication. From Tuutari, Europaeus wrote to S. G. Elmgren:

> Songs of the *Kalevala* and other runo-songs here seem remarkable. Pastor (Sakari) Finnander has an account of Tuutari, and more generally of all of Ingria, which he made himself. Could you please tell Kotos [Aksel Aspelund] and Reinholm about it, because those men want to put together something to publish for which they could get more from the account I mentioned. Pastor Finnander promised to let it pass into the hands of those who need it in Finland if they will return it undamaged. The mentioned account will come to Helsinki in the beginning of the autumn term, if not before. Councillor of State Sjögren has taken many things from it for his book *Beschreibung Ingermanlands*. Songs and even tales have been included in it. They have to ask for it quite soon if they need it before the autumn. (Translated from Haltsonen 1967: 6.)

A. G. Sjögren intended to move to Finland and sought the professorship of history at the University of Helsinki. However, he did not obtain this position and this change of plans was probably a reason that this descriptive account of a local area was forgotten among his other manuscripts. Sulo Haltsonen compared Sjögren's work, *Ueber die finnische Bevölkerung des St. Peterburgischen Gouvernements und ueber den Ursprung des Namens Ingemannland* (1833) with *Vanha Tuutari*, and wondered at the lack of citations: "It is difficult to say why Sjögren does not mention this in his sources" (Haltsonen 1967: 8). The matter could probably be explained by the characteristic way in which sources were presented in academic publications of that time: the purpose of sources was to correspond to the already existing explanatory models. According to Jouko Hautala, folklorists faithfully repeated the citations of their predecessors until the 19th century: "Providing abundant quotations, referring to written sources, and appealing to authorities demonstrated erudition and was more scientific than drawing on primary sources" (Hautala 1954: 25–26). Later, however, the situation did not change much. Authors often presented the same kind of folklorized factology, in all its exoticness,[2] which changed its form from poems and superstitions to political horror stories according to the "disappearance of tradition" and ideological demands and expectations.

According to V. F. Egorov (1973), the strengthening of semioticity in culture leads to the formation of second and even third level sign systems: signs of signs and signs of signs of signs. Addressing the stages of development of sign systems, Jean Baudrillard considers simulacra to be a means of constructing a hyper-reality. In the "seduction" of simulation, reality is replaced by signs for reality when image (*image*) goes through certain phases, eventually transforming into pure simulacrum. Image reflects the deepest reality (*réalité profonde*); image conceals and counterfeits the deepest reality; image conceals the lack of the deepest reality; lacking connection to any reality, image refers only to itself, and in complete simulation, it becomes pure simulacrum (Baudrillard 1981: 10–17).

There was a special demand for folklore and ethnographic materials among constructors of Finnishness. In their cultural-ideological agenda,

Ingria belonged to the sacred periphery of true Finnishness. Regarding this region, researchers invented a "wonderland of ancient Finnish wisdom" (Salminen 1933: 2) in the wake of the beginning of oral poetry collection in the mid-19th century. Interpretations of the foreignness, which was on the other side of the border, have been equally clear. In the present day, emphases have changed somewhat, but the problem remains symbolically the same. Scarcely a single researcher who repeats authoritative, self-evident claims takes personal responsibility for those statements. The rejection of those claims is correspondingly difficult because of course informants know how to respond to the expectations of questioners: "What was seen in the person identified as a singer was, in fact, tradition itself" (Virtanen 1968: 5).

On the basis of the theory of Jean Baudrillard, it might be possible to try to simplify at least the most general clichés of texts treating Ingria as a subject, such as "the world of runo-singers", "church folk", "otherness", "persecuted people", etc. However, it would be more appropriate to select texts and concepts with points of view relevant to the Ingria discourses themselves. In my opinion, *Vanha Tuutari* belongs among authentic texts of this type.

S. S. Averincev drew attention to the relationship between the *authorship* of a text and the *authority* which that text reflects. In addition to their etymological relationship and the differences in contemporary meanings, following Averincev, it may be observed that the words were originally directly connected: *auctor*, the subject of an action, and *auctoritas*, some quality of this subject. These terms derive from the intransitive Latin verb *augeo*, which indicates development or action, and to which many meanings are connected. Through its original significance, the term *auctor* belongs to the sphere of mythology, imparting an aspect of the ability of gods to function as the source of cosmic inception. Correspondingly, when an individual is attributed with sacred power, his actions acquire legitimacy through the authority of his name. S. S. Averincev emphasizes that in traditional culture, there is no significance in differences between religio-magical and juridical aspects of this phenomenon. For example, various authors are mentioned in different parts of Psalms or the Book of Proverbs, yet if these are approached from the perspective of tradition, the issue of authorship is nonexistent because in a tradition-based worldview, authorship is connected to power and authority: the "name" of the author is identified with the name of the text's "content". S. S. Averincev mentions a Stalinistic history of the Communist Party as a more current example of an actualization of the archaic model. Averincev interprets this text as simultaneously a work of I. V. Stalin and also as an epic about Stalin. Correspondingly, Stalin certainly did not write his biography himself, but it was nonetheless sacralised by his contemporaries, and through this the authorship of the text became identified with the authority of the leader. (Averincev 1994.)

Sulo Haltsonen (1967) drew attention to a letter of D. E. D. Europaeus, according to which the manuscript should have been made or forwarded by pastor Finnander: "The story forwarded by him." Haltsonen compared the handwriting of the manuscript with documents attributable to the pastor,

and he determined that the manuscript was not written by Finnander. According to Haltsonen, the manuscript was written in the first decade of the 19th century. The "final" version of the description was dated to the period between 1820–1860, because Joh. Passelberg is mentioned as the pastor of the parish of Liissilä in the text ("Now Joh. Passelberg is [pastor]"), which he was from 1822–1826, and Z. Finnander himself is mentioned as the vicar of the parish of Tuutari, which was the case from 1821–1862 (see Metiäinen & Kurko 1960: 17; *Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 33). Europeaus's letter could refer to the fact that the manuscript which he saw was larger than the version which is known today: "Councillor of State Sjögren has taken many things from it for his book *Beschreibung Ingermanlands*. Songs and even tales have been included in it. They have to ask for it quite soon if they need it before the autumn." (Haltsonen 1967: 6.) It is unclear whether Europeaus is referring to the *Vanha Tuutari* manuscript or A. J. Sjögren's study. Although "tales" might refer to stories about spirits and witches, there are no songs in the manuscript found by Sulo Haltsonen. Sometime in the beginning of 1810, Johan Thalus proposed the publication in Turku of the spiritual poems by pastor Johan Henrik Hoppius of Tuutari (†1757): "2. K. H. oli Hend. Joh. Hoppius, hän apul. student. Carl Damberg, se sanoi osavans. h. Hoppius suomen kieltä 7lä murteella" ['The second pastor was Hendrik Johan Hoppius, his assistant, student Carl Damberg; he said that the Rev. Hoppius could speak seven dialects of the Finnish language'] (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 33). It was probably due to pastor Finnander that the collection of poems went to A. J. Sjögren and finally ended up with the Finnish Literature Society (Haltsonen 1967: 6–7). If there were songs in the manuscript known to Europeaus, then pastor Finnander would be directly continuing the work of Johan Thalus and H. V. Bock, and if the "songs" were precisely those poems of pastor Hoppius, then Hoppius may also be considered one of the creators of the text.

The predecessor of Johan Thalus was his father, who held the same position for 56 years, and in his own way, Johan Thalus's father also belongs among the group of creators of the text. Information which he conveyed certainly had decisive significance in developing this description of the local area. Therefore, the magnitude of changes in the image of the concrete author of the text was equal to the changes in the text's consistency. The text itself assumed a central authoritative significance, particularly as a story about religious and superstitious life. When writing about ritual, Johan Thalus addressed his subject more and more often form the first person, which indicates that the mythological world was intimate and familiar to the writer.

He talks about the invisible world as about something very natural, with no indication of doubts about its existence. It was held on good authority, even if not personally experienced:

> Minä olen cuullut, cuin on joku ollut noita eläisäins, erinomattain on rickonut lähimäisens eläimiä eli muuta omaisutta, sencaldaisten sanovat jälken cuolemans cotona käyvän. Minulle ovat oikein toimelliset ihmiset sitä puhuneet. (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 68.)

> I have heard that there was someone who had been a sorcerer in his life, and who had harmed his neighbours' livestock or other property; they say that such people visit their homes after their death. I have been told this by people of great wisdom.

The writer talks about "oikein toimelliset ihmiset" ['people of great wisdom'] – i.e. authoritative individuals. The attribute *toimellinen* [archaic 'wise'] derives from *toimi* ['post, position, duty, affairs, action, doings'], *toiminta* ['action'], and refers to the subject of action and his features – *auctor*, *auctoritas*, *augeo*.

The publisher left the manuscript almost unedited in order to retain it as a valuable example of the popular folk-style of writing of that time: "The manuscript has remained unfinished. The orthography is irregular, the abbreviations are inconsistent, there are mistakes. However, one must remember that Finnish orthography was not yet established in those times." (Haltsonen 1967: 8.) A more detailed treatment nonetheless demands taking a closer look at the original manuscript because Sulo Haltsonen regularized the use of upper- and lower-case letters in his edition of the text. Using upper-case letters in writing could be explained both as influence from German, which in those times was the beaurocratic language of the Church, and also as a strategy of the text's creator to emphasize a particular significance in certain terms such as, for example, "kirkkoHERra" ['man of the cloth, pastor'], a compound word comprised of *kirkko* ['church'] and *herra* ['gentleman, mister, lord'] or *Herra* ['Lord'], in which emphasis can refer to the problematics of authority.

The most interesting sites in the manuscript *Vanha Tuutari* are certainly the points of view conveyed by the reporter reporter(s): what he selects as objects for description, what kinds of language and stylistic features he employs, what seems passed over in silence, etc. The priorities of the reporter are implicit in his choice of subjects. The fact that the chapter on history comprises more than two thirds of the text has already drawn attention.[3] This last chapter was of course the easiest to supply with material. However, one reason for this could probably be in the fact that the history, superstitions and rituals of the parish and whole area, as well as the most central events and linguistic details of parish life, interested the reporter as the most important, most authoritative information: "I have been told this by people of great wisdom."

Descriptions of wedding events are particularly detailed. This part of the text, as well as some others, is repeated twice. Repetitions differ in details. The magnitude of the wedding description (totalling almost one quarter of the whole manuscript) clashes sharply with the laconic presentation of funerals (half of a page). On the other hand, in academic texts dedicated to Ingria and Karelia – without even addressing any others – "the glow of the last" (Virtanen 1968: 5) holds central significance.

According to Hannu Syväoja, a special feature of historical prose epic during the period of Finland's autonomy as a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire (1809–1917) was constructing a nationalistic tradition in conditions of the modernizing of society. This process of construction was founded on

elements which were projected back onto the pre-modern era. Within this process, the role of Finland's potential rulers was outlined for bishops and the task of popular education for young priests. (Syväoja 1998: 194–195.) Discovering fields of research in the east guaranteed a continuity of images of the continuation of the pre-modern era. This enabled the projection of all sorts of things onto a new level and on a scale never seen before. "You stroll along a village path, which mirrors the river passing behind the houses, and there, sitting on the steps of one house, are a couple of old women in the twilight of years, two wrinkle-faced grandmothers, basking the sun of God's summer day." The collector noticed only what he wanted to see and also forced this on his readers: "Your eye is instantly drawn to them." It is as though there were no other inhabitants of the village on the scene. In their strange dresses, the old women of their twilight years walked along the village path "like some kind of ghosts from bygone days" and it is in the graveyard that "the old ones with their old ways" rested. (Paulaharju 1919: 84–85.)

According to Yuri Lotman (1987), the most important feature of unwritten culture is that it is not oriented to the increase of texts but rather to the renewal of the texts through the process of repeating them. The type of memory of this kind of culture attempts to preserve information about order but not of the breakdown of order. The establishment of written culture as a necessary form of culture arises from a confusion of historical circumstances, of their unpredictability and correspondingly from the demands of many different semiotic translation mechanisms. Lotman held writing culture to be a transition to a lower ideological level. (Lotman 1987: 3–11.) Those interested in the nature of kalevalaic poetry sought to reproduce texts of the field, and yet in collecting and publishing texts with a tremendous number of variants and in attempting to uncover the original forms of those texts, the connection to the so-called unwritten culture was purely formal:

> – No, mutta mitäpä asiaa tama vetää, tama lörpötyksien keruu? Mitä niillä tehhään?
> – Niitä pannaan paraimmat kirjaan, pränttiin.
> – No, mitä niillä sitte tehhään?
> – Kirjat myyään ja levitetään muualle.
> – Mitä ne sitte hyödyttävät, kuin ei niissä Jumalan nimeä ees mainitakaan.
> (Saxbäck 1904: 351.)

> – Well, but what's it for, this collecting of nonsense? What can anyone do with them?
> – The best of them will be put into a book, they will be printed.
> – Well, then what can anyone do with them?
> – The books will be sold and distributed elsewhere.
> – What would be the use of them, when God's name isn't mentioned in them at all.

More than enough moralizations of the inappropriate ethnicity and faith of the Lutheran and Orthodox populations are encountered in the travelogues

of collectors of runo poetry. Instead, the total problematization of secular culture radiates from between the lines of their resentful meditations. The reality described in the travelogues is absolutely full of ritual connotations. Collectors proved to be the central figures of the myth of fieldwork. Many researchers, who were marked as the servants of the devil, had direct contact with this matter. The field bore images of the apocalypse, particularly as the visitors could not find the solution to the riddle of the field from the authority of their collected corpus. The collection work, uncertain of its own goals, received religious magical content, which also renewed the symbolic meaning of the "nonsense": "Well, the end of the world is really getting close, because what has been collected is nonsense" (Saxbäck 1904: 350). This falling into the enchantment of "finality" by interpreters of the field was also in harmony with and fed anti-Russian sentiments. Actual landscapes and mental landscapes contrasted with one another in insuperable conflict. Pre-modern fields were marred by modernizing (modernized) strangers, who put the newcomers in an eschatological mood.

The first collectors of runo-poetry did not consider it necessary to document the names of singers. However, over time, bits of information about performers began to appear in sources, and finally, the handling of the image of the informants' identities and their everyday lives became the most central aim of research. "Acquisition from primary sources" has not changed the basic paradigm. In the sequel, the superiority of the unmodern was reflected as an "iconostasis" of the last singers, the "psalms" of the collection *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* ['Old Songs of the People of Finland'], "saints' lives" of biographical research, and other references of this sort to the authority of these symbolic peripheries. It is also interesting to observe how often the concept of authority appears explicitly in academic texts as the name of a field's "content" when researchers assess the significance of "tradition bearers", "the otherworld", "the dead" or "folklore" in general.

The publication of unknown texts does not necessarily add to their popularity. Sulo Haltsonen writes: "As far as is known, the descriptive account of Tuutari as a whole did not pass into the use of our researchers. In 1894, J. J. Mikkola copied part of it and donated the copy to the Finnish Literature Society, so that particular part had not been unknown to our folklore researchers." (Haltsonen 1967: 9). In this statement, there is perhaps the indication of some sort of unknownness which could be unraveled if one were to follow how and in what types of contexts researchers referred to it. However, the significance here is not so much the paucity of references or their inconsequentiality, but rather that the manuscript presents an alternative to the many clichés of discourses concerning Ingria-related subjects. Where use of the concept "Ingria" was appropriate in some connection and with certain ideological, religious, etc. conditions, then the quasi-concept "Ingrians" became common, and it is now even in Russian publications (e.g. as a translation loan from studies of Finnish colleagues), revealing that researchers had once again succeeded in obscuring the purpose of their texts and killing fields which had moved semiotically. As a signifier without a signified, the concept "Ingrians" fits perfectly into the sphere of pure simulacra. This virtual Ingria, which exists only in the minds

of wholly untutored readers, is constructed through the conjuncture of rank in the valuation of ethno-religious tendencies, through the inexact, inexactness or pure artificiality of ethnonyms which have been in use for whole generations of interpreters, as well as through ignoring geographical, historical and ideological realities. However, among the addressees of "Ingrian" texts, readers of precisely that sort are not few. Researchers rarely or only in passing paid attention to the peculiarities of "Ingrian" basic concepts (see e.g. Nevalainen 1990, Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1997). Reflection of this sort is rather characteristic of crafters of periphery-like texts, such as memoirs, in which the views sometimes differ completely from academic and propagandistic rhetoric:

> Lapsuudessani aluetta ei nimitetty Inkeriksi eikä meitä inkeriläisiksi vaan suomalaisiksi. Passissakin oli merkintä "Suomalainen". Alueella sijaitsevia kyliä nimitettiin Venäjän suomalaisiksi kyliksi. (Iivarinen-Savorina 1994: 7.)
>
> In my childhood, the region was not called Ingria and we were not called Ingrians but Finns. Even in our passports it was marked "Finn". Villages situated in the region were called Finnish villages of Russia.

> Ihmettelin, kun meitä sanottiin inkeriläisiksi Suomessa. Kuten jo aikaisemmin mainitsin, en ole kuullut Inkeristä mitään, oltiin vain suomalaisia vaikka asuttiin Venäjän alueella, joku haukkui vallan ryssiksi. (Toivonen 1998: 29.)
>
> I was surprised when we were called Ingrians in Finland. As I mentioned earlier, I had not heard anything about Ingria, we were just Finns although we lived in a region of Russia, some even called authorities 'Ruskies'.

In the manuscript from Tuutari, the Lutheran population was concretized either as Savakko and Äyrämöinen or Finns depending on the context, when the Lutheran sphere was set in relation to an Ižorian or Russian symbolic field. Johan Thalus presents many kinds of information concerning religious or magical concepts of the local population and concerning ideological contexts of religious interaction. At the outset of his response to questions concerning life in the parish, the writer states: "Keis. Petar 1. toi venäläisi. Suomalaiset ajettjn tieltä pois sinne tänne reunapuolijn, tiettä venäin kirkon" (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 11) ['Emporer Peter I brought Russians. Finns were driven hither and thither from their path to the periphery of the region, out of the way of the Russian Church']. Furthermore, there are many examples of the loyalty of the government toward the Lutheran Church and its priests. Episodes exhibiting changes in religious practices and the dynamics of those changes draw particular attention: "Se on vielä tavallinen joka seurakunnas Ingerenmaalla, että pitkänä perjantaina ja Johanexen aattona paastovat" ['In every parish of Ingrialand, it is still common to fast on Good Friday and on Midsummer's Eve'] (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 59). This is followed by the note: "usia paasto myös torstain pitkän perjant. edellä, vaan aivan harvat ja vähän on nijtä, jotka paasto pitkän perjantain, ej mitään syö eli juo, vaan sitten cuin auringo on laskenut ja männyt majillens." ['Many also fast on the Thursday before Good Friday. There are only a few of those who fast on Good Friday,

without eating or drinking anything until the sun has set and gone into its shed.'] (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 59.)

A characteristic example is the mention of the father of the family from Liissilä, who:

> suuressa paastosa ej anna liha keittä, ja koco paaston ajan nijn cuin venäläinen paastoa. Cuitengin cala syöpi, hänellä on se pyhänkuva nurkassa, cuin herkiä syömästä, nijn joka kerta seiso sen kuvan edessä, noja itzens cuvaan pain, mutta ei ristj. Cuin tule myrsky ja rajuilma, nijn otta hän sen pyhänkuvan ja pane ilmaa vastaan, että se estäis hänen vuotenstulon vahingosta. (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 59.)

> during the great fast, would not let meat be prepared and he fasted as a Russian during the entire period of the fast. However, he eats fish, he has an icon in the corner, every time he is finished eating, then he stands before the icon, he bows to the icon but does not make the sign of the cross. When a storm and thunder comes, he takes this icon and holds it up to the storm, so that it will protect his crops from harm.

It may be that descendents of the Orthodox population who were Lutheranized in 1600 are in question in examples of this sort. They could perhaps also refer to similarities in the use of language of Lutherans and Orthodox individuals: "Serebethan seuracun. puhen- eli sananparsi on yhtä savakoin cuin myös äyrämöisin, ej paljon eroitusta ingeroisista." ['The parish of Serebet. Adages and sayings are the same among Savakkos and Äyrämöinens, not much different from Ižorians'] (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 58.) A characteristic feature of the manuscript is also that the writer emphasizes differences between Finnish and Russian populations more clearly by describing economic features, but not language or religious ones (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 23–24).

A theological conflict between the "Ruomin poslannik" ['the ambassador of Rome'] and his barber, who happened to be Lutheran, is presented as a serious non-seriousness:

> Nyt jo 60 vuotta on siitä, kun Ruomin poslannik oli Pietarissa, hänellä kävi yksi parranajaja ajamassa partaa 2 tai 3me kertaa viikossa. Kerran kysyy poslannik eli ambassadeur parranajajalta: mitä uskoa sinä olet. Par.ajel. vastasi: minä olen Lutheruxen usko. Poslan. sanoi: voi, sinä onnetoin, mitä uskoa sinä olet. Kuuleppas, mitä minä sinullen ilmoitan, minä yhtenä yönnä näin unta, minä olin kuolevanna ja tulin taivasen. Siellä oli joka uskosta mitä maan päällä on, mutta Lutheruxen uskosta ej ollut yhtän ainoata. Parr.ajal. vastais: kuinga lienee. Kuin oli parran ajanut, mane oven tygö seisoman, rukoile lupaa, että hän sais untans ilmoitta, ambassadeur sanoi: sano, sano, mitä unta sinä olet nähnyt. Parranajel. s.: minä olin unissani kuolevanna ja jouduin helvettjn. Posl.: no näetkös, että se on tosi. Luth. usk. tulevat kaicki helvettjn. Parranajel. Vastais: minä kävelin ymbäri helvetti, mutta en nähnyt yhtän perkelettä, kattila kiehui ja järvi kuohui tulesta ja tulikivestä. Minä kävelin, tulin vihtoin sijhen leviän porttjn. Sijnä seisoi yxi ramba perkele tupina kädes, minä kysyin, missä nyt kaicki perkelet ovat, koska ej yhtän nyt helvetissä heitä ole. Se ramba vastais

> minullen: etkös tiedä, että paapsti Ruomissa kuoli, ne mänivät kaicki sinne maahanpaniaisiin. Mäne sinäkin, jos tahdot. Minä sanoin: haudatkot van ilman minua. Posl. tavoitti mieckans, p. ajel. kijtti kuin pääsi ovesta ulos, ej tohtinut enä mänä part. ajeleman. (*Vanha Tuutari* 1967: 53–54.)
>
> Now, sixty years have already passed since the time that the ambassador of Rome was in St. Petersburg. One barber visited him two or three times a week. Once, the ambassador asked the barber, 'What is your faith?' The barber replied, 'I am Lutheran.' The ambassador said, 'Oh, you luckless man, what a faith you have. Listen to what I have to say to you. One night, I had a dream that I was dead and came to Heaven. There were people of all faiths that are on Earth, but there was not a single Lutheran.' The barber replied. 'Could be.' After shaving the ambassador, he went to the door and prayed for permission to tell his dream. The ambassador said, 'Tell me, tell me what kind of dream you have had.' The barber replied, 'I was dead in my dream and I ended up in Hell.' The ambassador said, 'So, you see that it is true. Those who believe in the Lutheran faith all end up in Hell.' The barber replied, 'I walked around Hell, but I did not see any Devils. A cauldron was boiling and a lake was foaming with fire and brimstone. I walked until I finally came to a wide gate. There stood one crippled Devil with a cudgel in his hand. I asked where all of the devils were now, because not one of them was now in Hell. The cripple replied to me: 'Don't you know that the Pope died in Rome, they all went there to the funeral. You can go too if you want.' I said, 'Let them bury him without me.' The ambassador reached for his sword; the barber gave thanks when he got the door. He did not dare to go shave him anymore.

In St. Petersburg, Lutheran priests could clash with their adversaries of the Roman Catholic Church. Sometimes this subject was current: "Now, sixty years have already passed since the time that the ambassador of Rome was in St. Petersburg." This is the only episode in the whole manuscript where a direct critique of other religious dogmas is addressed. The main point of this depiction may be that it reflects the feigned tolerance of these adversaries at the expense of the Lutherans: "There were people of all faiths that are on Earth, but there was not a single Lutheran." For its part, this could perhaps also be connected to current issues of power in addition to ethnic conflicts. The significance and position of the Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches was different. Political nuances and nuances of religious expansion emerge in this construction of "the ambassador of Rome".

Thus the descriptive account of Tuutari has had a multifarious group of commentators as writers, questionnaire translators, quoters of the manuscript without citation, editors of the text, informants, copiers and redactors of the manuscript, including Sulo Haltsonen and the new publishers of the text. Among the authors of *Vanha Tuutari*, let us also include Carl Axel Gottlund as an influential figure behind the scenes:

> Se on yksi vanha, mutta yksi tyhmä luulo, että "kaikki on sulettavana yhteen malliin;" mutta se on yksi uusi ja visas sana, että "pitäköön kukiin omat muotonsa." Ennen uskottiin ettei yksi valtakunta oisi mahdollinen, ellei hänessä ollut *yksi* uskomus ja vielä uskotaan, ettei se ouk pysyvä, ellei hänessä ou

> *yksi* puhe. Pohjois-Amerika ja Venäjän moa, jotka ovat ne voimakkaammat hallitukset moailmassa, osottaavat ettei voaitak kummaistakaan; ja että ne valtakunnat ovat kaikkiin vahvimmat, kussa ne erinnäiset osat soavat kukiin piteä omat luontonsa, ja kussa heitä nioitaan yhteen, voan ei sevoitetak tahi sulatak. (Gottlund 1831:1.)
>
> It is one old but stupid belief that 'everything must be cast in one mold'; but there is one new and wise saying that 'let each retain its own form'. Earlier, it was believed that no one state would be possible where there was not *one* religion, and it is still believed that it is not stable where there is not *one* language. North America and Russia, which are the most powerful governments in the world, show that neither of these is valid; and that these governments are most powerful where those different parts can retain their own nature, and where they are kept together, but not mixed or melted.

Sakari Finnander (1793–1875) was from the family of the cantor of Hollola. After completing his studies in Turku, Finnander became the assistant of the Vicar of Tuutari in 1821. Following the death of H. V. Bock, he became responsible for the parish until 1862, whereafter he retired to Vahersalo in Kantasalmi. Sulo Haltsonen drew attention to the image of Finnander as a person: "eminent preacher, powerful nurturer of the people and eager promoter of Finnish culture … and became a member of the Finnish Literature Society in 1833" (Haltsonen 1967: 6). Haltsonen emphasizes that Finnander was a subscriber to Gottlund's *Otava*. (Haltsonen 1967: 6.) It is precisely in this relation, that the manuscript of Tuutari and its sequential series of creators were representative of the cult(ural) phenomenon which did not belong to the "monolingualized" construction of Finnishness. According to the Gottlundesque way of thinking, Ingria as an alternative field of meaning could be characterized, for example, by the following:

> Lutherans do not make it their objective to compete with the Russian Orthodox Church, which they think of equitably as an Older Sister. As a minor church, and a church that raises its spiritual flock to be patriotic and to be active both within the State and toward the state, one of the objectives of the Russian Lutheran Church is to cooperate with the Orthodox Church in every way, and to assist it in the spiritual enlightenment of Russian society. In relation to this, Lutherans perceive themselves as a small but indivisible and important part of Eurasian Russia and, for their part, they want to do everything possible so that the State will prosper. (*Russkie ljuterane* 2003.)

An interpreter is separated from the field by the interpretations of the field which he puts forward. This difference between the subject and the object of research is indeed fictive, however, just like a copyright. The unmodern continues its existence as a parallel and all-permeating *réalité profonde*. Authors are only authors formally, remaining as (anonymous) mediums of the dominant structure. Attributing authority to the field is selective, and yet the option of choice does not necessarily remain in the hands of the interpreter; the interpreter is not actually talking about the field, but

rather the field is speaking through the interpreter. Indeed, owing to the fact that the seduction of thinking of mental images of mental images of mental images as the *parole* of the field also belongs to this matter, it is necessary to separate the wheat from the chaff by updating conceptions. In the example presented above, a reader who is at least minimally acquainted with the discourses related to "Ingria" can observe that connections to the construed interpretations of virtual "Ingrianness" are not to be found in the characteristics of these church members, and thus there is a better chance to confirm the constant mental images. This view is in fact positing the Ingrian Church over religious and ideological priorities.

For Russian-Finnish academic discourse, "Ingria" as a semiotic periphery is, on the whole, one of the most essential sources of "forgotten texts". Sulo Haltsonen placed such a high value on this manuscript that he searched for it for a decade. Therefore, it is very strange that the text was not published for another ten years after it was found. It is highly probable that the publication of the manuscript in those times would not have corresponded to cultural-ideological needs. This stands in opposition to present circumstances in which the "trumpeting" of academic discourse is more clearly oriented to filling its own emptiness with supposedly "forgotten texts". The "memory" of academic discourse is selective.

However, *Vanha Tuutari* has a truly special significance among "Ingrian" texts. Johan Thalus's knowledge of local history, linguistic aspects of the population and the ritual life of communities was exceptionally broad. Thalus's exceptional powers of observation are revealed in the multiple descriptions of weddings of Finns (Savakkos and Äyrämöinens) and Ižorians where they incorporate the direct speech of participants, comparisons of the dialectal terms encountered among the different ethnic groups, the minutia of detail in his explanation of the whole system of kinship terms and so forth. The cantor who taught rudimentary reading to children of the parish wrote a local chronicle which, owing to its comparative aspect and adequate terminology, belongs among the rarities of the sphere of "Ingria"-related texts.

In his foreword to the text, Sulo Haltsonen poses the questions: Who is the creator of this text? Who supplemented the text? When was the text born? In other words, and keeping an eye on subsequently critical "Ingria"-discourses: What kind of local and non-local referential background does the text have? How and why do so-called self-evidentialities pass on their pilgrimages from one study to the next? Who are the original discoverers of clichés, if those could in fact be located? These questions are necessary when examining different "Ingria"-related texts, which are themselves sources for research rather than presenting relevant interpretations with potential new dimensions of meaning. *Vanha Tuutari* contains points of view on local history and tradition which are various and exceptional from the norm: it is in many respects a fundamental text. Mythologems and ideologems established as self-evidentialities in relation to the accentuation of form and content by the manuscript offer the opportunity to observe how truth-like discursive reality really is, and what kind of appropriateness it has.

The readership of the manuscript remains an independent phenomenon. This account of a local history was written in a local dialect and using

Swedish and Russian loanwords with aspirations to the established literary Finnish language, and yet without ever mentioning the mythological lining of its historicity. It therefore certainly awakens extremely diverse interpretations among its receivers. This multilingual text is unlikely to ever become more well-known that it is now. Sulo Haltsonen gave the untitled manuscript the name *Vanha Tuutari*. Against the mists of discursive reality's obscurity, the characterization of D. E. D. Europeaus has proved enduring and corresponds to the original purpose of the text: "an account of Tuutari, and more generally of all of Ingria."

Translated by Marja-Leea Hattuniemi, Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 This is a quotation from Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and the Margarita*; it has become a common saying in Russian, bearing the sense that thought and word cannot be destroyed. – *Translators' note*.
2 On word for word quotation without citation in the 19th century, see Zadneprovskaja 2002: 38.
3 The published version of the complete text totals 57 pages.

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Aado Lintrop

Great Oxen of Twilight

Storytelling and Riddlemaking at Calendar Solstices

This paper will discuss storytelling and riddlemaking associated with liminal periods in the folk calendar on the basis of examples from Estonian and Udmurt traditions. It will introduce a broader cultural context in order to shed light on the background of this aspect of tradition. Nearly fifty years ago, the Estonian folklorist Richard Viidalepp already pointed out similarities between ritual storytelling and riddlemaking traditions of the Estonians and those of several other peoples (including Udmurts) in his doctoral dissertation (defended in 1965, published in 2004). Unfortunately, Viidalepp had limited comparative material for making broad generalisations. In the dissertation chapter which treats the function of folktales, he offers several examples of storytelling on hunting and fishing trips, but these are limited to indicating a magical productive function of storytelling (see Viidalepp 2004: 64–82). This paper will attempt to take Viidalepp's observations a step further to uncover what type of beliefs have generated Estonian expressions such as *ämärigun ärja suure, videvigun villa pika* ['the great oxen of twilight, the long wool of dusk'] (AES, MT 130, 29 < Kambja) and *äbendame ämärät, pühitseme pimeet, siss kasusse hää ärjä' ja suure' sarve'* ['let's honour the twilight, celebrate the dark time, thus good oxen and big horns will grow'] (ERA II 284, 625 (599) < Sangaste).

Liminal Periods of the Folk Calendar

Concerning liminal times in the folk calendar, it is possible to speak of two models which are relevant to both day/night alternations and the annual cycle. The first model situates liminal periods between two qualitatively different sides of the cycle (day and night, summer and winter). The second model marks the points of climax on either side and emphasises the significance of the time surrounding (or marked by) these (midnight and midday, winter and summer solstices). In the Estonian folk calendar, the first model is at the foundation of "twilight" and liminal periods called *jaguaeg* and the "time of souls"; midnight, midpoints of summer and winter derive from the second. Our longest clearly marked liminal period is the time of souls, connected with the transition from summer to winter.

Twilight has the same position and function in the daily cycle. In the Udmurt folk calendar, twilight (referred to by the loanword *akšan*) is also very important. For example, more than a century ago, the Udmurt clergyman and ethnographer Grigorij Vereščagin wrote: "*Akšan* is the deity of twilight. He does not tolerate working, noise making, eating, etc., during the period of twilight, but demands that people must lie down at this time." (Vereščagin 1995: 46.) In addition to twilight, midday and midnight also play an important role. The Besermyans, an ethnic group in Northern Udmurtia, call the liminal period following midnight *nevrama* (possibly from Russian не время ['not time for/to'] or не вовремя ['not timely']). It lasts about one hour. It is not permitted to enter a house during this period: "You can't enter a house at midnight because *šaitan* [the devil] will enter with you." (Popova 2004: 35.) After sunset, one is not allowed to clean rooms, and children's clothing is not left outside because the devil or spirits of diseases can inhabit them (*ibid.*). At midday, it is prohibited to swim, to go into the field or the forest, or to start a long journey. During this period, the forest spirit *čaššakuz'o* / *ludkuz'o* or the field spirit *mežakuz'o* inspect their territories and the probability of meeting them is extremely high. (Popova 2004: 37.) Morning twilight (*žyt akšan*) and evening twilight (*čuk akšan*) have different semantic values. Evening twilight has a rather negative significance. It was prohibited to start a work or begin supper at that time. When entering a house, one has to touch the oven in order to get rid of diseases which may have been carried inside. Morning twilight has a positive character. Water brought from the spring during this time has healing properties. (Popova 2004: 38.) Similar beliefs were also found among the Udmurts. In addition, midday was the main period when the water spirit was active, and which in some places was also connected with the deity called *aktaš*: "Among the evil spirits *oktaš*, the midday god, who demands that this particular time of day will not be dedicated to work, has an important place, and punishes sternly disturbers of his peace." (Bogaevskij 1888: 17.)

Both models of liminality were also used regarding the week. For the Besermyans and Udmurts, Wednesday is the critical day of the week (*arn'a šor* ['midweek'] or Besermyan *viro* / *vironunal*, Udmurt *virnunal* ['day of blood']). This day also has the same significance and/or name among the Bashkir, Chuvash people, Tatars, Mokša-Mordvins and Maris. Some connect the day with blood sacrifices, but this does not offer an adequate explanation for the case of present day Udmurtia, where Wednesday is considered a bad and hard day. The last Wednesday of the month is considered especially hard: *s'öd kuaka n'ör no ug vaiy karaz so nunale* ['even the rook will not carry a single twig to its nest on that day']. (Minnijaxmetova 2000: 92.)

Riddlemaking and Liminal Periods

The two special liminal times of the Udmurt folk calendar are the period of midsummer, called *invožo dyr* ['*invožo* time'], and the period of midwinter, called *vožodyr* ['*vožo* time']. The latter was often associated with sessions of evening storytelling and especially riddlemaking, which were believed to

determine the herding luck of the following breeding cycle. The terms for these periods derive from the root *vež-* marking liminality or borderline nature. The root *vež-* is considered to be from Finno-Ugric **vaješ*, cf. Finnish *vaihe*, Estonian *vahe*. The Estonian folk calendar includes the period known as *jagu-* or *jäguaeg*, which has roughly the same linguistic meaning as the Udmurt *vožo*, and it is correspondingly associated with riddlemaking to ensure herding luck. *Jaguaeg*, however, is known only among the North-Estonian coastal population. The same period was more generally known in Finland, where it was called *jakoaika*. According to Richard Viidalepp (2004: 50), "In Finland, *jakoaika* marked the period which joined the end of one year with the beginning of the next; very likely, this has also been the case in Estonia." Some scholars have seen the period as the one necessary for uniting a solar and lunar calendar (Vilkuna 1950: 288). The tradition of celebrating the twilight links *jaguaeg* to the all-souls' period, which was known all over Estonia; however, twilight was often celebrated even later in the annual cycle, sometimes up to Yuletide or the calving and lambing time. In the Udmurt language, *vožokyl* ['*vožo*-language'] or *vožomad'* ['*vožo*-tale' or '*vožo*-speech'] was the term for "riddle". (In Udmurt mythology, *vožo*s are supernatural water-related creatures,[1] which will be returned to below.) In the Udmurt tradition, riddlemaking was connected with a specific period lasting from *pukro nunal* (Assumption) to *vyl' ar* (New Year) or *jö vyle sulton* (Epiphany) (Perevozčikova 1982: 5) and riddlemaking was forbidden after the start of the calving and lambing: *jö vyle sulton bere madis'kyny ug jara: pudo vera kare* ['after the Baptism of Jesus one should not tell riddles: animals will produce milk'] (Vladykina 1998: 73). A comparative example from the Seto region in Southeast Estonia is as follows:

> Talsipühi paastuh, ku olõ-õs viil nuuri eläjit, sõss mõistutõti mõistatuisi ja aeti juttusit. Lihasöögi aigu sai jo lauta noorõ' eläjä', sõss inämb aetas nii. Ma ka' tiiäi mille, a ku pääle talsipühi me latsõ' nakse viil jutustama, sõss vanaimä kõ ütel: 'Olõi nüüd inämb määnestki jutusõ ajamist. No' jo' noorõ' eläjä' laudah!' (ERA II 194, 354 (2) Meremäe.)
>
> At Yuletide, when there were no young cattle yet, people told riddles and stories. After the fast, [when] the young cattle were already in the sheds, riddles were no longer made nor stories to. I'm not quite sure why, but when we, the children, started telling stories after Yuletide, our grandmother used to say, 'There will be no storytelling anymore. Young cattle are already in the shed!'

It must be added that the taboo on riddlemaking after calving or lambing has been more popularly known in Belarusian, Ukrainian and Russian traditions.

Supernatural Visitors of the Udmurt Liminal Period

Now it is necessary to account for the mythological background of the Udmurt *vožo* period. In some (especially northern) Udmurt regions, *vožo*s

were supernatural guests of the winter liminal period. For example, the Udmurts of the Glazovsk District believed that water spirits came into the villages and inhabited the saunas before Christmas. They could be encountered on the street at twilight. According to N. Pervuxin (1888: 75):

> It sleeps during the summer *vožo dyr*, but during the winter solstice (before Christmas) it leaves the water and spends most of its time in saunas, though it can be met on the street. This is why no Votyak [Udmurt] dares to walk alone on the streets without a burned splinter of wood during Christmas.

The water spirits of the Christmas period were most often called *vožo*s. Pervuxin continues (1888: 99–100):

> From December 25th to January 6th, small (no more than a couple archines[2] tall), colourful devils (with tails and horns), which are however relatively similar-looking to each other, walk on the streets of villages, settlements, and even the town of Glazov. The Russians call them *kuliš*, the Votyaks [Udmurts] *vožo*s. Like water spirits, the *vožo*s fear even the smallest burned splinter of wood. [....] Those, who walk around without a splinter of wood, will be tripped up by *vožo*s. [...] to that purpose they will turn into a post or the corner of a house [....] They may take a man to his neighbour's house instead of his own, and may make a woman drive other people's cattle into her own yard [....]

For the Udmurts, *vožodyr* is the period for mumming. The most common name for mumming is *pörtmas'kon* (cf. *pörtmany* ['to change, transform; to slander']). Other words for mumming are *pendzas'kon* (cf. *pen* ['soot, ashes'], *pendzyny* ['to incinerate, burn to ashes']), referring to the most common way of masking by smearing the face with soot or ashes, *vožoias'kon* ~ *vožoas'kon* ['*vožo*ing'] (in several regions the mummers called themselves the *vožo*s) and *čokmorskon*. The latter derives from the word *čokmor* – a wooden club (cf. Russian чекмарь ['wooden club, beater'] < чека ['wedge, pole']) – and refers to banging on house corners and floors with sticks and clubs, a characteristic activity of the mummers, which helped to repel evil spirits and diseases from the house and the village (Vladykin 1994: 227). The Udmurt Christmas mummers almost seem like they have split personalities: they wore clothes inside out, had faces smeared with soot, men wore women's clothing and women wore men's clothing, all indications that they were visitors from the otherworld where, according to a widely spread belief, things are the reverse of this world (on peoples living in Siberia and Altai, see Lintrop 1995: 76 – 78). The fact that the mummers were believed to bring luck in herding relates them to the souls of ancestors, who were considered the primary bringers of herding luck in many cultures. And, last but not least, the mummers were addressed as *vožo*s, which were undoubtedly related to the dead ancestors.

The similarity between the Udmurt *vožo*s and Russian mythological creatures of the winter liminal period *kuliš ~ kuljaš (*кулиш ~ куляш*)* or *šulikun* (шуликун) was introduced in an article about the Udmurt water spirit (see Lintrop 2004: 23). It is interesting that the Russian terms

are loans from Finno-Ugric (Mansi *kul'* ['devil'], *kul' oter* ['Master of the Underworld'], Komi *kul'* ['water spirit, devil']; cf. Estonian *koll* ['evil spirit']) or Turkic languages (cf. Yakut *süllükün*, possibly from Old Turkish *suvlug*, connected with water) (Lintrop 2003: 126, 131, 2004: 23). In addition, I have proposed that all of these supernatural guests emerging from the water at a critical period are based on a conception of the Land of the Dead situated somewhere downstream and/or beyond a body of water (Lintrop 2003: 131, 2004: 23). It is possible to see a clear connection between the dead and the supernatural visitors of liminal periods in the Besermyan folk calendar, where the time for performing a ritual called "the sending off of *vožo*s" or "departure of *vožo*s" is dependent on the location of the village:

> It is necessary to mention that the different times for performing the ritual in different villages are connected to the idea that *vožo*s will leave downriver and return at the summer solstice and the blossoming time of rye. At first they started to send off *vožo*s in villages situated near the river's upper course, after that in the middle part, and in villages along the lower course of the river on the last day. Nowadays, this custom is preserved in the villages along the Lekma and Lema Rivers. (Popova 2004: 165–166.)

Elena Popova presents excellent contemporary fieldwork material on the subject of relations between the *vožo*s and the dead: "They are dead, drowned people, the sides of their coats are wet. It is this peculiarity that makes it possible to distinguish real *vožo*s from the mummers of one's own village." (Popova 2004: 166.) The following example is particularly relevant to the present paper:

> It's forbidden to speak ill words about *vožo*s. They look like people. They have both young and old among them. *Vožo*s are dead people. Besermyans are dressed in Besermyan clothes, Udmurts in Udmurt clothes. They wear boots and bast shoes. They are the dearest guests, the golden ones. They can hear everything. (Popova 2004: 167.)

If supernatural visitors of liminal time are considered the dearest guests, one must greet and entertain them properly.

The Estonian Time of Souls and It's Visitors

I have pondered on the question of why most early reports situate the time of souls between Michaelmas and Martinmas, for example: *Siis võtame engi vastu, pääle mihkle päeva üts nädal' võtame vastu, enne mardipäeva üts nädal' saadame minema* ['Thus we welcome souls, a week after Michaelmas we welcome them, a week before Martinmas we'll send them away'] (EKA < Paistu). Conversely, according to more recent interpretations, the time of souls begins on All Souls' Day. Compare, for example, an extract from the commentation to the new wooden calendars:

> Kooljakuu (november) 2. Hingepäev. Kadunukesed tulevad kodu kaema, neile jäetakse söök ööseks lauale. Algab videviku pidamine. (Kama 1988: 53.)
>
> November 2, All Souls' Day. The dead are returning home; food is left on the table for them. The celebration of the twilight commences.

Had there been no earlier references to the pre-Christian time of souls, this shift might be explained by the transition to the new calendar. In this case, the association of the time of souls with a specific period of the season would be so fixed that it would counterbalance its dependence on specific feast days. However, if this were the case, why would November be referred to as "the month of souls" in some places (e.g. Finnish *marraskuu*), while in the old calendar the time of souls fell in October? According to Estonian folklorist Mall Hiiemäe (1991: 233):

> Tuleb arvata, et enne kirikukalendri kanoniseeritud tähtpäevade meie maale jõudmist ning siin kinnistumist on hingedeajaks olnud aastalõpu aeg, mille määrasid looduse sügisene hääbumine koos taimevegetatsiooni lõppemisega, üksiti kõige pimedama aja saabumine, põlluharijatel ja karjakasvatajatel lõikusaja lõpp.
>
> It must be concluded that before the canonical church calendar holidays were introduced and became fixed in our country, the end of the year was considered the time of souls, conditioned by the autumnal withering of nature, the ending of plant vegetation, and the onset of the darkest time of the year, the end of harvest for farmers and herders.

It logically follows that the time of souls was connected with agricultural activities at the end of October and the beginning of November, and as the significance of this identification of the end of the year diminished, the time of souls was transferred to December in some areas and the so-called official end of the year was adopted.

Be that as it may, the liminal period entailed preconceptions about the opening of passageways between this world and the otherworld. The spirits of dead ancestors visited homes, while the same passageways also remained open to other spirit creatures. It appears that the visiting souls were mostly familiar and expected. In some parts of Estonia (the area surrounding Viljandi), their visits were celebrated with "masking and mumming", but this was markedly different from the "mumming" tradition at Martinmas. This period demanded obeying several rules. Compare, for example, the following text from Vigala:

> Sügisel, kui ööd kõige pikemad on, peetakse 'hingede püha', sel ajal laotakse õled tuppa maha, et käimisest ega millegi asja maha kukkumisest kolinad ei oleks, et 'hinged', kes sel ajal haudadest koju tulevad, selle üle nurisema ei hakkaks. Ka ei raiuta ega pesta sel ajal. (H III 23, 780 < Vigala.)

> In autumn, when the nights are longest, people celebrate 'the day of the souls'; at this time straw is spread on the floor so that no noise will be made by walking or things falling over, and the 'souls' which are visiting the home from their graves will not complain. It is also forbidden to cut wood or do the laundry at that time.

The taboo against making noise, doing laundry and fetching water from a river, lake or sea with dirty vessels was also observed by Udmurts during critical periods. The time of souls was a good time for celebrating the twilight. The liminal period on the cusp of the darkest part of year was filled with riddlemaking and storytelling in the transition between day and night. According to beliefs found across Estonia and Finland, the tradition of riddlemaking ensured the birth of piebald calves or lambs; in Latvia it predicted the good growth of pigs (Viidalepp 2004: 71–73).

In the narrative repertoire of liminal periods, it is possible to find intriguing reports about the popularity of telling memorates at that time – and more specifically memorates which describe encounters with supernatural creatures. Such tales are known in Estonian as well as Udmurt cultural traditions:

> Vanasti räägiti videvikul igasugu juttusi tontidest ja kodukäijatest, untidest ja igasugu ennemuiste-juttusi. (ERA II 298, 155 (4) < Järva-Jaani.)
>
> In the old days, at twilight people told all kinds of stories about ghosts and revenants, werewolves and all kinds of ancient stories.

> Õdagu ole talutoan just kui vabrik. Kui oll mõni jutumiis, sis tuu selet, mis ta mõistõ. Väega pallo seletati tondijutte tuul aal. (ERA II 160, 10/11 >Kanepi.)
>
> In evenings, the room became like a factory. When someone was a fine storyteller, he told what he knew. Telling ghost stories was very popular at that time.

Concerning the Besermyans, Elena Popova states:

> In the first half of the 20th century, the evening sessions of adults and the aged were extremely popular. People came together to tell folktales and all kinds of stories, especially memorates about *vožo*s. During the period of [midwinter called] *vožodyr*, people used to tell folktales and make riddles at social evening gatherings, which were popular among the old as well as among the young. (Popova 2004: 175.)

A Yuletide custom of the Mari people called *šorykiol*, or "sheep-leg", entailed an evening gathering at a house and playing games, telling folktales, and making riddles (Kalinina 2003: 177–178). Other data suggests that storytelling and riddlemaking primarily took place in the period preceding Christmas (Kalinina 2003: 230).

In Estonia, the older time of souls was celebrated before Martinmas and ended with All Souls' Day, when the welcomed dead eventually departed. When homes were visited by Martinmas "maskers and mummers" a week later, these were no longer representatives of the dearly departed but simply

visitors from the otherworld. The turn of St Catherine's Day's "mummers" followed after that. Visitors, clad in costumes, went from house to house in the manner of a reminder: *Watch out people – the door between the worlds is open!*

Udmurts did not have the time of souls as it was known in Estonia. Dead relatives were left food and they were asked to return before or during several important calendar holidays. However, there was one ritual that was performed only in the winter part of the year, mostly before Yuletide. This was called *jyr-pyd sëton* [literally 'head-legs sacrifice/offering'] or *viro s'oton* ['giving blood'], and it was a singular event during which children brought their departed parents the last major offering. This ritual was called "a reverse wedding"; its objective was to finally unite the deceased father or mother with the dead ancestors. The Udmurt Yuletide "mummers", like their Estonian Martinmas equivalents, were the visitors of a liminal period. They came from the otherworld, but they were not exactly "familiar souls". Nevertheless, they represented benevolent forces, reflected in their behaviour and noisemaking to repel evil spirits.

Entertaining Supernatural Creatures

But why are riddlemaking and storytelling so important particularly during critical periods? Certainly, riddlemaking and storytelling at liminal times do not constitute a phenomenon which is otherwise unique to Estonian, Udmurt and Besermyan traditions. Two aspects of these traditions which place the issue in a broader perspective have been introduced above: first, the belief in blurring of the boundary between our world and the otherworld; second, herding luck (and often good harvest), has been principally associated with dead ancestors among many peoples (including Udmurts and Estonians). There is however a third important nuance to consider: throughout the ages, people have told stories and sung to supernatural creatures for one reason or another, and riddlemaking is often associated with these creatures as well. In his monograph, Richard Viidalepp (2004) provides several examples of how hunters tried to ensure hunting luck by telling stories. Relying on the works of Andrej Maskaev, Viidalepp (2004: 64) claims:

> [E]ven in 1940, a tale was recorded in Mordovia about the old lady of the forest, who is described as greatly interested in storytelling: she may even fall asleep from listening to the hunters' tales and, if this happens, the hunters' catch is even greater.

In 1929, Dmitrij Zelenin (1929: 66) wrote:

> Observations carried out among the Turks of Altai by N(adežda) Dyrienkova and L(eonid) Portapov, the young ethnographers of our museum, resulted in the discovery of a specific method used to please the master of the taiga [....] The artel of hunters used to take a specialist-storyteller to the woods with them. The Altai Turks believe that the master of the taiga likes to listen to folktales,

> especially when the teller is accompanied on a musical instrument [called] a *kobyz*, and thus he comes close to the hunters' cabin to listen to these tales. As a reward for this entertainment, the master of the taiga will give the hunters hunting luck.

While resting in the evening, Buryat hunters "usually tell folktales, sing, play the *balalaika* and the hand-made violin", "all these forms of entertainment are deemed necessary so that *khangai* (the master of the forest) will give more squirrels and sables" (Zelenin 1929: 67). The Soyots of Buryatia believe that the guardian spirit of an area always listens to people telling folktales, and does not like bad storytelling (Zelenin 1934: 223).

Spirits of Stories

Evidently, tales have been told and riddles made in order to please supernatural creatures in many parts of the world. However, there is another, more interesting aspect to this phenomenon: the nature of characters "cut from the navel"[3] in tales – characters who were conjured up in the course of storytelling are similar to supernatural beings, and thus they require special treatment, not to mention the deities and fairies in tales who are full and equal representatives of the otherworld *per se* and *par excellence*.

For example, *khaigee*s, singers of *khai*s, Khakass epic songs, believed that their special talent came from specific spirits called *khai eezi*. They were convinced that after the spirit had entered them and the spirits of the tale's characters had been conjured up, the storytelling performance could not be interrupted; the tale's heroes had to be given rest by narrating the tale to the end. If a break was needed during a long performance, the storyteller had to search for the moment when the characters were having a party. However, if the story was left unfinished so that the characters had not conquered the evil spirits of the tale, the latter started harming people. The tale characters that were not dealt with could even exact revenge by killing the singer or storyteller. The Khakass *khaigee*s were (and still are) shaman-like people who undergo an initiation, in the course of which they establish contact with the spirits of epic songs with the help of mountain spirits called *tag eezi*s. They described the performance of the songs as follows, "I close my eyes and see scenes unrolling, which I then describe" (van Deusen 2004: 78).

Stories and Riddles as a Means of Traditionary Control

In addition to this approach, however, an alternative explanation can be considered – namely, that storytelling and riddlemaking are necessary for convincing spirits and gods that people know how the world is organised, and know their responsibilities, rights, etc., in that world. Put in words befitting the scientific paradigm – stories, songs and riddles were used as means of traditionary control for maintaining a community's worldview and traditions.

I suspect that traditional knowledge, which is particularly crucial for a given community, was (and is) transmitted in a pre-literate society in at least two modes, one of which is significantly more rule-oriented then the others. The information must be restated in different ways and it can even be translated into a different mode. As an example of this, we can take the holy songs of the Khanty and Mansi which women and children were not allowed to hear. The women and children nonetheless knew the contents of these songs, although they were forced to transmit them in another form. Thus, already from early childhood, a potential singer carried the contents of the songs with him in a reworked form. This may have been useful for him to develop a better understanding the songs later, and also for keeping "tighter rein" on them, inhibiting the poetic-expressive aspects of singing from taking over unduly. It is evident that such mythological songs were primarily oriented toward the transmission of traditional knowledge for the Khanty and Mansi from the fact that the hero of these stories was usually identified by means of stock phrases which were intertwined into legends (see Lintrop 1997: 95, 2006: 124–125).

The mythological songs of the Papuans of New Guinea contain only hints and key words which are taught to the chosen individuals during an initiation process which lasts for several years. Everyone was allowed to listen to the songs (as well as the stories told in the men's hut, since there were not any even remotely sound-proofed walls in Papuan villages). At the same time, however, the myths were kept secret. In this situation, the initiated individual had to consider three distinct texts: the song itself, the concealed myth, and the interpretation of the song by the un-initiated. We can perhaps state without exaggeration that for pre-literate societies, in the transmission of their religious beliefs and worldviews, each performance is a recreation, and in this process, texts of at least two different modes converge: one mode is, from the point of view of the transmission of the traditional knowledge, the main channel of information, while the others contain interpretation, commentaries, attitudes, evaluations. From the perspective of the present article, stories and riddles may also be considered as two channels of traditional knowledge complementing and confirming the same information. The phenomenon is probably even more widely known. In *Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge* (1988), Jeremy Narby describes a South-American shaman who claims that "twisted language" enables him to see the essence of things, "Singing, I carefully examine things – twisted language brings me close but not too close – with normal words I would crash into things – with twisted ones I circle around them – I can see them clearly" (Narby 1998: 98–99).

Connecting back to the discussion of liminal periods, I would like to propose the following scheme, which resembles the bear feast of the Ob-Ugrians: the task of liminal period visitors (including dead ancestors) would be to visit homes and ascertain whether they are still held in esteem, whether the living are knowledgeable about the rules prescribed by the gods, etc. It should be remembered that both Estonian Martinmas and St. Catherine's Day's costumed and masked figures as well as Udmurt *vožo*-period mummers were regarded as personifications of visitors from

the otherworld. They had an obligatory repertoire to perform, and more importantly, they demanded a traditional reception. In many Estonian regions (especially Western Estonia and its islands), St. Martin's Day's and St. Catherine's Day's mummers controlled the progress of work on a farm, the diligence and intelligence of adult family members, children's ability to read, etc. (Hiiemäe 1994: 22–23). Riddles or figurative language as the special language used by the visitors of the liminal period were also a means of such a control. The fixed order of the Khanty and Mansi bear feasts, the performance of a strictly determined number of songs, each containing important parts of the traditional worldview and mythology, obligatory knowledge for every member of the community – all this testifies to the fact that the Ob-Ugrian bear feast is not simply a rite of hunting magic or a kind of primitive theatre. The Ob-Ugrian bear feast is, to a certain extent, similar to a complex shamanic ritual – according to this scenario, various supernatural beings hear "about the jolly house of the wide-waisted wild beast of the swamp", leave their houses, travel to the feasting place, introduce themselves, and offer their protection and custody in vital matters concerning the community's wellbeing. The whole process of the ceremony must demonstrate that the people are well versed in the world order and the rules ordained by the deities. The bear which returns to its heavenly father must tell in detail how it was treated by the people, and whether they behaved correctly, as in the verses of a Mansi song: "My father said: 'You descended into the corner of the human house. How did they treat you?'" (Kannisto & Liimola 1958: 383.) The bear is like a high religious authority that inspects his congregation.

Storytelling and Riddlemaking as a Means of Protection

These visitors from the otherworld could also prove rather harmful. Zelenin argues that in specific cases, storytelling or riddlemaking protected one from a malevolent supernatural creature. He provides the example of the *přezpoldnica*, the midday spirit of the Serbs of Luzhitsy. At midday, the *přezpoldnica* walked on the field and killed all the women that it encountered. The only way to escape from it was to tell as many stories as possible – whether about working with flax or other things. She who did not know what to tell was doomed; she who did, was saved. In the latter case, the midday spirit would tell the storyteller, "You have taken my strength." (Zelenin 1934: 227–228.)

A nice complement to the list of such spirits is the Russian midday spirit *poludnica* (полудница), a female spirit who was clad in white clothes. The *poludnica* forced people to compete in riddle contests and tickled the losers to death. It must be observed that the Slavic *poludnica, polednice* is very closely related to water spirits. In Polesia, *poludenik* [literally 'midday spirit'] was an alternative name for a water spirit (Levkievskaja 1995: 339). In Ukrainian folk songs, the water spirit gives a maiden three riddles to solve: *jak ugadaieš – do bat'ka pušču; ne ugadaieš – do sebe voz'mu* (як угадайеш – до батька пущу; не угадайеш – до себе возьму) ['If you guess – I'll let you

return to your father; if you don't guess – I'll take you for myself'] (Zelenin 1934: 229). The water spirit brings us back to the Udmurt tradition.

The Slavic water spirit was particularly active around midday and midsummer, and even the forest fairy was in some areas believed to rest or reside underground in winter.[4] Among Permian peoples, however, supernatural creatures associated with water inhabited saunas during the period of the winter solstice in particular. Komi-Permjaks called these creatures *kul'pijannez* (*kul'* ['devil, water spirit']), while Udmurts called them either *vumurt*s ['water spirit'] or *vožo*s. As noted above, both are related to the *kuliš ~ kuljaš* and *šulikun* in the Russian tradition, who were generally harmful towards people but at the same time helped them to predict the future.

Riddlemaking and Shamans

Riddlemaking goes particularly well with the discussion of the supernatural visitors of the liminal period, because, on the one hand, riddlemaking functions like a secret language for expressing the intrinsic things in the world, and on the other, it is linked to an important aspect of North-Siberian shamanic rituals – namely guessing. According to autobiographical accounts of Nganasan shamans, it is necessary to acknowledge that the spirit whom a candidate meets for the first time during a dream journey of his initiation period should first be recognized. This recognition, naming or guessing of the identity of a supernatural being, is one of the examples of traditionary control. In addition, the devotee has to recognize and name the places he visits and objects of importance that he encounters. Recognition in the vision is equivalent to framing it in a traditional form. The would-be shaman either unriddles the visions of his initiation period and, in that way, gives them a sufficiently traditional form, or he eliminates them. Concerning recognition in visions, it is possible to learn more through the medium of shamans' autobiographical accounts. Semen Momde, a Nganasan shaman, told:

> We saw a tent all covered with ice. A man and a woman were sitting there; a naked boy was walking around in the tent. The tent covers were made from snow and ice; the fire in the middle of the tent was hardly burning. 'Who are you, from what places are you coming?' they asked. I answered: 'Two are leading me. They told me to go along the ancient path. Probably you are spirits of sicknesses.' There were all kinds of pots and cauldrons in the tent; all were filled with pus. They told me to guess – the boy asked: 'Who am I?' I answered: 'Probably you are headache.' The old man and woman asked: 'Guess: who are we?' – 'The old man is the beginning of tuberculosis. The old woman is the beginning of cough.' They said: 'You are right. If such a sickness would come to your people, you will call for us and we will help you.' (Popov 1984: 102.)

An active traditionary control over shamanic visions continues after the initiation period is over. In the case of an experienced shaman, this is

expressed in the form of guessing or the so-called "quest for the right path" which takes place during rituals. With the help of such guessing, untypical or inappropriate elements are eliminated from the shaman's actions. Shamans seeking advice in difficult situations from people who have a good knowledge of the tradition is also a part of traditionary control. Often, an experienced shaman has to continue recognizing and naming objects and beings of the supernatural world during the rites. For example, Tubiaku Kosterkin, a Nganasan shaman, had three helping spirits called *hošitele*. They helped him to recognize several places in the upper and lower worlds as well as objects encountered on his shamanic journeys which "did not appear to him as they actually were". (Gračeva 1984: 91.)

Riddlemaking and Divination

Like a shaman who finds the right way by riddlemaking or guessing, people organise their world by riddlemaking and assure their supernatural visitors that they are on the right path – for which they are in turn rewarded with herding luck and good harvest. It is no coincidence that the Estonian verb *arvama* ['to think; to guess'] derives from the shamanic vocabulary. It is etymologically related to the Old Turkic *arva* ['to cast a spell'] and *arvaš* ['spell']. The eleventh-century Mahmud dictionary from the city of Kashgar includes the phrase *qam arvaš arvady* ['a shaman incants an incantation'] (Nadeljaev 1969: 58). The Estonian words *arp* and *arbuda* and Finnish *arpa* and *arpoa* are of the same origin. As part of a shamanic ritual, guessing was closely related to predicting or prophesying. In many languages the word for predicting and riddle-solving may be the same: for instance, Russian *zagadat'* stands for both predicting and riddle-solving. Likewise, in Estonian folklore, the verb often used for riddle solving (especially in parallel verses of Kalevala-metric songs) is *arvama* ['to think; to guess'], which has been (and occasionally still is) used to denote divination.

In addition to other characteristics, Yuletide was a widely known period for making predictions. Interestingly, according to the Yakut or Sakha beliefs, making prophesies at Yuletide was possible only because of the presence of spirits called *süllüküns*, who came from the waters to the earth (Zelenin 1930: 23). A report from a cultural area much closer to Estonians says: *S Roždestva do Kreščenija po zemle xodili šulikuny* [....] *Snarjažennye ili rjažennye izobražali kak raz ètix šulikunov* (С Рождества до Крещения по земле ходили шуликуны [....] Снаряженные или ряженые изображали как раз этих шуликунов) ['*Šulikun*s wandered on earth from Christmas to Epiphany [....] Maskers and mummers were representatives of these *šulikuns*'] (Adoněva 2001: 198 < report from the Folklore Archives of the St Petersburg State University, archival reference Пинеж).

It is interesting to observe that in Karelia, predictions or prophesies were made at a hole in the ice on a lake or river. *Vierissän akka* ['old woman of the Epiphany'] was the mythological being who ruled the period. She was only the size of a hemp seed at the beginning of Yuletide and the size of a haystack by the end of it. Karelians believed that she could pull people under the ice if

they were not protected by a magic circle drawn on the ice with the blade of an axe (Lavonen 1977: 75). Similar reports can be found from Besermyans:

> Fortune-telling outside the house or beyond the border of the village was considered the most dangerous. In order to protect oneself from the mythical *vožo*s, people used to take a rooster with them or draw a circle with an iron tool (scythe, sickle). While standing in the circle, people 'listened' to the destiny and tried to summon *vožo*s (Gordino village). It was important that the circle was not be opened or destroyed, otherwise the fortune-tellers 'might die or become seriously ill'. (Popova 2004: 176–177.)
>
> They say that *vožo*s come from under the river ice. They told that some villager was pulled under the ice at Yuletide (Šamardan village). (Popova 2004: 165.)

In Karelia the following charm was recited during the ritual of protecting with iron:

Rakennan rautaisen aijan	I am building an iron fence
teräksistä seipähistä	Of steel palings
muasta taivahen suahen,	From the earth to the sky,
taivahasta muahan suahen,	From the sky to the earth,
čičiliuskoilla sivoin,	I am confining it with lizards,
kiärmehillä kiännetelehen,	Encircling it with snakes,
panen hännät häilymään,	Making their tails wave,
piät piällä kehajamaan.	Heads sway.
(Lavonen 1977: 79–80	
< A. Remšueva, Voknavolok/Vuokkiniemi.)	

According to the materials presented by Niina Lavonen, storytelling of the time was equated with making a similar magical circle:

> There was this rule that people had to tell folktales at yuletide, even three tales during a single night. While the folktales were told, an iron band formed around the house from each tale so that no evil spirit could enter the house. (Lavonen 1977: 75 < A. Remšueva, Voknavolok/Vuokkiniemi.)

Vilho Jyrinoja from Akonlahti affirmed:

> Every evening, three folktales had to be told in every house. From this, it was as though three iron bands formed around the house, but these protected the house from all evil. You can even tell a rather bad tale, it is no sin; God likes humour, doesn't he? (Lavonen 1977: 76.)

Conclusion

After observing the topic from different perspectives it is possible to summarize that Estonian expressions such as *ämärigun ärja suure, videvigun*

villa pika ['the great oxen of twilight, the long wool of dusk'] (AES, MT 130, 29 < Kambja) have nothing to do with the mythical Great Ox of Finnish and Estonian runosongs, nor are they expressions of fear (as in the Estonian expression "fear has great eyes"). Instead, they are connected to beliefs about critical (liminal) periods and about the supernatural visitors associated with those times. Entertaining spirits with stories and riddles on the one hand and demonstrating one's knowledge of the world's order on the other – these are possible grounds for the phenomenon observed. As such, liminal period storytelling and riddlemaking have magical-protection and magical-fertility functions, but they also provide a special means of communicating with the supernatural sphere for a community. Here it must be remembered that "riddle" is *vožokyl* ['*vožo*-language'] or *vožomad'* ['*vožo*-tale' or '*vožo*-speech'] in the Udmurt language. The phenomenon can also be considered as means of control over the transmission of oral tradition important to a community group.

The next question would be: of the tales and riddles that had to be told and performed, were there some which were more acceptable than others, and among those others were there some that were left aside as inappropriate? There is no direct information available on this point. The Karelian examples of the 20th century suggest that anything could be told, even if the telling was badly done; the essential thing was that the act of storytelling took place. This is, however, not conclusive when turning to the Siberian parallels. And of course we cannot say much about the storytelling of ancient times. However, another, more important question, is whether the acts of storytelling and riddlemaking themselves protected people from harm, and whether storytelling and riddlemaking were favoured by the supernatural beings which protected people from evil spirits, leading them to reward tellers with luck in herding and good harvest. On the basis of the material presented in this paper, I am inclined toward the latter explanation.

NOTES

1 *Vožo*s are described as little hairy demons with tails and horns, and are mostly active during the liminal winter period.
2 An archine is an old Russian unit of measure equivalent to about 71 centimeters or 28 inches. – *Editors' note*.
3 This is how the Khanty refer to mortals as opposed to deities who are "uncut from the navel".
4 Concerning the forest fairy see Kriničnaja 2004: 253.

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Nadežda Šutova

The Main Pre-Christian Gods of the Udmurts and Sacred Places Surrounding the Udmurt Village Nižnie Juraši

Udmurts are a Finno-Ugric people who have since antiquity inhabited territories west of the Ural mountains between the Kama River and the Vyatka River. The intangible heritage of this ethnic group is preserved in certain religious phenomena. This was possible owing to the Christianization process, which began in the middle of the 18th century and left a portion of the population of South Udmurtia unbaptized. Through the synthesis of archaeological, folkloristic and ethnographic evidence, this article seeks to reconstruct the significance of some Udmurt pre-Christian gods. This article utilizes a diverse range of folklore and ethnographic materials related to the pantheon of Udmurt vernacular religion. These materials were collected from the 18th century to the 20th century.[1] Results of research from the end of the 20th century are also used (e.g. Atamanov 1977, 1980, 1983, Vladykin 1994), as well as medieval archaeological evidence (Semenov 1979, 1982, Oborin & Čagin 1988, Goldina 1987, Šutova 2001). My interest in this subject stems from my investigation into the field of Udmurt sanctuaries. Discussion will therefore first focus on the less frequently addressed kin-group gods known as *Voršud*, *Mudor* and *Invu*, and their relationships to one another. It will then turn to the unique religious phenomena related to the intangible heritage of the Udmurts found in the village of Nižnie Juraši (Graxovo District, Republic of Udmurtia, Russian Federation), considering the complex of sacred sites connected to the deity *Bulda*. These sacred places, distinguished by purpose and social value, were studied by the author of this article in 1998.[2] This article will open areas of Udmurt mythology, ritual practices and sanctuaries that are not widely known.

Archaeological Evidence of Udmurt Gods in the Latter Half of the First Millennium to the Early Second Millennium A.D.

As is well known, sacred sites, burials and cult objects present the central forms of material manifestations of ancient beliefs. Material expressions of sacred places and objects allow us to approach the characterization of pre-Christian gods of local Permian tribes. The available information on

medieval Udmurt tribes allows us to assert that they had two types of sacred sites. One type was located within or near a fortified habitation area. This type was associated with the gods of the kin-group. The other type was situated beyond the area of habitation, in a forest, within a grove, and related to the worship of the lords of wild nature. Cult places in the territories of habitation sites were areas of packed clay enclosed by fences, where the remains of bonfires and calcified bones were found. The base of the bonfire could be made with timber-blocking. A wooden representation of the god of a kin-group could be erected next to it. Fires were built and rituals were conducted in honour of this god. Food and other sacrifices were burned in the bonfire in the process of the ritual. Sacrificial sites dedicated to the gods of wild nature were located within fenced enclosures in elevated locations in the forest. These were sanctuaries for the inhabitants of the surrounding areas. Ritual acts in these sacred places involved building fires and the sacrifice of wild animals, and later the sacrifice of domestic livestock. There were also offerings of metal or bone arrows (a masculine symbol?), broken ceramic dishes (a feminine symbol?) and some other objects.

Numerous images of a mighty goddess of fertility and her attributes were found in the medieval habitation areas of Prikam'e. These include tablets representing the Great Mother, images of a female on a horse, which is stepping on a snake, horse-shaped pendants, and so forth. Among the cult objects which were found, there were also images of female and male figures representing the guardians of the family or kin-group and of spirit-lords of nature related to the immediate environs of the people (Oborin & Čagin 1988). In the epoch of the Middle Ages, the most significant ancient god of local kin-groups was the fertility goddess in her various manifestations. I have studied the significance and role of this female persona in the beliefs of inhabitants of Prikam'e in other publications (Šutova 1996, 2001: 214–224, 254). It is necessary to point out the paradoxical situation that although most medieval cult tablets were found in areas inhabited by ancestors of the Komi-Permjak, the most explicit evidence of traditions of goddess worship is nevertheless only preserved in Udmurt culture.

Folklore and Ethnographic Evidence from the Late 18th to the Early 20th Centuries

The most characteristic sacred places from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries were the sanctuaries of the family or kin-group called a *kuala* (куала)[3] for the worship of the gods of domestic spaces – *Voršud* (Воршуд), *Mudor* (Мудор), and *Invu* (Инву) – and the sacred groves called *lud* (луд) for the worship of gods of wild nature – *Lud* (Луд) or *Keremet* (Керемет) and *Njulesmurt* (Нюлэсмурт).

The family sanctuary – called *Poči kuala* (Почи куала) or *Pokči kuala* (Покчи куала), *Sion pottonni* (Сион поттонни), and so forth – was located in the yard or garden of a house. This was the most widespread location for family rituals and associated worship. The main sacred object of the

family was also kept here. The most archaic types of family sanctuary were fenced enclosures and unroofed timber-block structures. Later, this type of family sanctuary was a square timber-block structure without foundation, windows or ceiling, and a roof of one or two sloping planes. The floor was packed earth. A fire pit was in the center, demarcated by stones. Naturally, a private family sanctuary and the divine guardian of the family were connected to the sanctuary and god of the kin-group.

The kin-group sanctuary, a Great Kuala – called *Badzym kuala* (Бадӟым куала) among Southern Udmurts and *Zök kuala* (Зӧк куала) among Northern Udmurts – was larger in size but was otherwise a square timber-block structure corresponding to the family sanctuaries. This sanctuary could be situated within the village, in the yard of the keeper of the *kuala*, the *Budzym kua utïs'* (Будӟым куа утись), or else in a specially fenced grove either within the village or on its edge. It could also be situated outside of the village, in a secluded place in the forest close to a spring or brook. In the former Glazov District, these were made in the yards of poor families, outside of the village on riverbanks, on elevated locations or somewhere under a tree (in which case it was without a roof). The tendency to situate the cult place of the kin-group in a secluded location remote from habitation and at a low elevation is undoubtedly a later phenomenon as a consequence of pressures from the Christianization process of the Udmurts, as well as from the struggle against religious cults during the Soviet period. Within the traditional worldview, various gods and spirits of the kin-group (*Voršud*, *Mudor*, and *Invu*) inhabited these places.

The Sacred Grove of a kin-group – called *Lud* (Луд) or *Keremet* (Керемет) among Southern Udmurts and *Vösjas'kon čačča* (Вӧсяськон чачча) among Northern Udmurts – was necessarily placed outside of the inhabited area in an elevated fenced enclosure near running water. These sanctuaries derived from locations for the worship of lords of the natural environs – *Ludmurt* (Лудмурт) and *Njulèsmurt* (Нюлэсмурт). As a consequence of Muslim religious influence, these groves and the gods which inhabited them became called *keremet* (керемет).

Each local group of Udmurts had its own combination of gods and goddesses which were most highly honoured and worshiped according to particular factors in different historical periods. Among the most widespread gods and goddesses were the main gods such as *Inmar* (Инмар), god of the sky, *Kyldysin* (Кылдысин), creator, god of the earth, *Kvaz'* (Квазь), god of the atmosphere and weather; guardians of the family and kin-group (*Voršud, Mudor* and *Invu*); Lord of Meadows and Fields (*Lud* or *Keremet*), and Lord of Forests (*Njulesmurt*). These gods and spirits were anthropomorphic, primarily taking a role in men's worship. Images of *Kyldysin*, *Voršud* and *Invu* preserve some female features.

The length of one article is not sufficient to provide a detailed analysis of all of the main figures of the pre-Christian Udmurt pantheon. Concentration will therefore be on a more detailed treatment of the family and kin-group gods here. These are the gods which protected the family and kin-group. They inhabited the *kuala* and were honoured there with sacrifices. As mentioned above, at least three names of these spirits are known: *Voršud,*

Mudor, and *Invu*. In religious practices and beliefs, the relative significance of these three gods varies between local groups of the Udmurt population.

Voršud

The majority of extant information concerns *Voršud* or *Vožšud*.[4] In academic research, the etymology of the word *voršud* is not beyond dispute. The most convincing etymology for this theonym is the explanation proposed by V. K. Kelmakov (1979: 203) and later supported by V. E. Vladykin (1994: 275–276), according to which the term *voršud* would be a compound *voršud* in which both elements are synonyms, the former from Proto-Permic **vor* ['happiness, light, shining'] and the latter from Indo-Iranian **šud* ['joy, happiness, pleasure'].

The term *voršud* has multiple meanings. It is necessary to differentiate *Voršud*, the god of the kin-group, and *voršud*-objects. The term *voršud* could designate: *a*) an anthropomorphic spirit guardian; *b*) its idol kept in the *kuala*; *c*) the place on which the idol stood; *d*) the sacred box in which all sacrificial offerings were kept;[5] *e*) the kin-group and the group of people worshiping this god; and also *f*) special hanging pendants which indicated that the wearer belonged to a particular kin-group.[6] P. M. Bogaevskij (1890 IV: 107–108) quite reasonably recognized an old cult of the ancestors in the worship of *Voršud*. Researchers have repeatedly indicated a connection between family and kin-group religion and the mother's kin (Buch 1882; Pervuxin 1888 I: 136–137): Udmurt legends always connect the origin of the name *Voršud* with "happy women, female ancestors", whom the Udmurts later began to worship (Gavrilov 1880: 161, Vasil'ev 1906: 28, Xudjakov 1920: 356).

Information has been preserved concerning symbolic representations of the god *Voršud* existing in the past. These representations were made of wood, clay, bast, copper, silver, dough or bread, and kept as idols in the Great Kuala.[7] The representations can be divided into six groups according to their characteristics:

1. Anthropomorphic idols were represented in the form of a wooden block or a wooden circle, a chest (or box) of bast, a small humanoid figure made from clay, objects fashioned from silver, dough or (the soft crumb of) bread. Interestingly, figures occasionally had a clearly formed head with nose and mouth, horns of an ox, a beard made from grass and "metal letters" on its chest. One silver *Voršud* is known that weighed approximately four pounds. Another wooden figure was 40–50 cm tall and 15–20 cm wide.[4]
2. Figures of wild and domestic animals and birds – a squirrel, ox, horse, wooden goose with an iron beak, a wooden swan.[5]
3. Flat, circular metal objects called *dendory* (дэндоры), singular *dendor*, dialectal *demdor*. Occasionally, information was given concerning images on these objects: scenes with riders, images with animals (e.g. an ox). *Dendorki* (дэндорки) were small silver or tin coins which were kept

in the *voršud* chest. However, Sarapul and Malmyž Udmurts referred to silver or tin coins which ornamented women's necklaces and bracelets as *dendorka*.[6]

4. Representations of *Voršud* in dolls called *mynjo* (мынё) were uncommon. These were small, rough-crafted wooden figures clothed in scraps of fabric.[7]
5. The skulls of horses, cows, goats and some other animals as well as the dried hazel grouse could also represent *Voršud*.[8]
6. A tree (birch, spruce, silver fir, etc.) and its branches could be a likeness of *Voršud*. According to an ancient description of a sacrifice among Udmurts in the Ufa Province, the Udmurts were praying in the family *kuala* in front of tree branches which symbolized the house spirit (Emel'janov 1921: 61). It is also necessary to take into account the tremendous significance of trees and branches in ritual ceremonies conducted in the *kuala*.

In relation to representations of *Voršud*, I would like to point out that the analysis of etymologies made by M. G. Atamanov (1980: 3–66), showed that zoonymic and ornithonymic terms (for wild animals, birds, insects, fish) were at the foundation of *Voršud* names (such as *Čola*, *Durga*, *Dok'ya*, *Kon'ga*). Analogical anthropomorphic representations of gods made from wood may have existed among the Komi. There is at least information that St Stephen of Perm was able to chop them down with an axe and burn them in a fire (Smirnov 1890: 65–66, Emel'janov 1921: 43–44).

Mudor

Mu (му) means "earth; piece of land". *Dor* (дор) means "area; place of birth; homeland". (УРС 1983.) The compound *mu-dor* literally means "homeland, place where one lives". M. G. Atamanov (1977: 33, 34, 37) proposed the etymology of the word *mudor* as "home; home of the ancestral mother", from *mu* (му)[9] ['mother, female ancestor'] and *dor* (дор) ['home; place where one lives']. Russian and foreign travellers in the 18th century reported that the term *mudor* was used to refer to all different types of objects kept in the sanctuary of the *kuala* and related to the cult of the kin-group. I. G. Georgi (1799 I: 55–56), for example, wrote: "They call the small board or sacrificial altar *Mudor* (Мудор) and *Modor* (Модор) and worship it with such devotion that none dare to approach it [...]". According to N. P. Ryčkov, "[...] among revered objects, the most revered is the so-called *Modor*, which is nothing more than branches of a silver fir [...]". When Ryčkov wished to touch the board attached to the shelf over which grass had been arranged, it was not permitted him. When he inquired of the reason for this strict prohibition, his Udmurt hosts informed him that it was one of the most important and revered objects which is called *Modor* and which is the god and guardian of their homes. No one is allowed to touch this object besides the old man who is keeper of the kin-group *kuala*. Only "one old Votyak [= Udmurt] who lives in their village" can take the branches from the board;

"[w]hen he dies, then his son takes his place, and if he has no son, the closest male relative [takes his place ...]". Every year, a young calf was sacrificed in front of the branches, which are a representation of the household god. The ears of the calf were put on the board where the silver fir branches were. According to N. P. Ryčkov, *Modor* was also the term for the tree which was preserved in a dark and dense forest. The Udmurts of subsequent generations would select branches from this tree to represent the household god. (Ryčkov 1770: 158–159.) P. M. Bogaevskij (1890 IV: 85–86) proposed that a potential relic of the *Modor*-tree tradition was reflected in a description of M. Buch: among Udmurts of the Sarapul District, each founder of a new farm went to the forest and selected a birch tree guardian for himself. According to V. E. Vladykin (1994: 102), Bernat Munkácsi succeeded in recording the ancient term *bydzym mudor* (быдӟым мудор) ['great *mudor*']. This information allowed V. E. Vladykin (1994: 69) to conclude that the term *mudor* [literally 'center or edge of the earth'] signified the main tree of the great forest which grows in its center (i.e. the world tree).

The equation of *Mudor* with various objects in the kin-group's sanctuary persisted until the 19th century. Usually, *Mudor* as a god was differentiated from *mudor* as a concrete object (e.g. the sacred shelf in the *kuala* on which food offerings were placed). In some kin-group structures, there was a special place – a log leaned vertically up against the front wall, facing the fireplace – called *mudor pukon* (мудор пукон) ['seat of the *mudor*']. Later, at the end of the 20th century, Orthodox icons were called *mudor* in central and northeast regions. In southern regions, *mudor* referred to the left corner in the house (which was considered sacred) and the shelf in it, which held the icon. (Atamonov 1977: 37.) Unusually, the worshipping *kuala* itself was called *mudor kuala* (мудор куала) and its keeper was referred to as *mudor utis'* (мудор утись) in the former Kazan' Province (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 85–86, Emel'janov 1921: 51–52). The Zavjatsk' Udmurts[10] use the word *mudor* to refer to a special sacred stone in the *kuala* (Šutova et al. 2009: 164–165, 173, 209). According to legends, *Mudor* had the form of a human being. For example, there was a story that one old Udmurt built a storehouse on the location of a *kuala* and he put the *mudor* and stones from the fireplace under the storehouse's floor. As a consequence, when spending the night in the storehouse, people heard moaning in the night as from someone who was ill – the moaning of the *Mudor* itself (Mixeev 1900: 899). On the basis of some prayer texts, it is possible to propose that *Mudor* had strong muscles and wings (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 83, 137).

P. M. Bogaevskij was the first to observe that the god *Mudor* was connected to a river and he provided examples in support of this fact. In the Great Kuala, people addressed him with the words: *Oste,*[11] *Sijpejvajskij budzym Mudore* (Остэ, Сийпейвайский будӟым Мудоре) ['Have mercy upon us Lord, highest great *Mudor* of Sijpevaj, keep us well'], Sijpevaj being a small local river, or *Oste, Jakšur, Nylgi Zjablek budzym Mudore!* (Остэ, Якшур, Нылги Зяблек будӟым Мудоре!). The term *mudor* means "near the earth", and therefore these expressions can be translated "Have mercy upon us Lord, great protector of the land near the river such and such." (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 82–83.) *Mudor* was often a personification of some

local river. In this case, its cult was completely independent of the cult of the kin-group *Mudor*. For example, the inhabitants of the villages of Ven'ya, Pirogovo and Ludorvaj in the present day Zavyalovo District worshipped *Vatka Mudor* (Ватка Мудор); only members of the Ven'ya kin-group prayed in honour of it. Members of the Pos'ka kin-group and other kin-groups near the Yus'ki village prayed to *Pinal-Mudor* (Пинал-Мудор). In Bogaevskij's opinion, *Vatka Mudor* was once the god of the Ven'ya kin-group. In the process of the Ven'ya kin-group's migration from the Vyatka River to its new location, another *Mudor* appeared as the guardian of the new area. In this process, the old *Vatka Mudor* became one of the secondary guardians of this kin-group. Because of this, *Vatka Mudor* was not addressed in ritual ceremonies performed in the kin *kuala*. An analogous example, described by the same researcher, is found among members of the Džjum'ja (Джюмья, i.e. Ӟумья) kin-group, who live around the Nylga village and worshipped the *Mudor* of Sijpevaj. However, the Džjum'ja kin-group from the Novyj Senteg village worshiped the *Mudor* of Njursivaj. On the basis of these facts, the researcher concluded that the *Mudor*s of surrounding rivers were the gods of kin-groups. Moreover, he concluded that ancestor worship stood at the foundation of cults associated with the sacred buildings, and that this worship transformed into the deification of water. However, he did not explain the nature of this transformation or how it happened. (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 87–89.)

In the preceding examples can be seen changes in the name of the god *Mudor* in relation to the rivers near the location where the members of the kin-group lived, and it can be seen that according to different sources, the word *mudor* assumed different values and meanings. It has been shown that the term *mudor* was understood to mean:

1. A particular sacred tree
2. The sacred shelf in the *kuala*
3. The special branches of a silver fir which were taken from the particular tree also called *Mudor* (1)
4. Orthodox icons standing on the sacred shelf in the *kuala*
5. The being which lived in the sacred chest
6. The sacred stone in the *kuala*

In some areas, ashes from the hearth of the old *kuala* were also called *mudor*. *Mudor* could be conceived in anthropomorphic form, it could also have ornithomorphic features (e.g. wings), and was closely associated with a tree, stone or river.

The Relations of Voršud and Mudor

In traditional conceptions of Udmurts, *Mudor* and *Voršud* appear as interrelated and interchangeable beings. However, they were not identical in the nature of their functions. Among Udmurts of the Kazan' Province, the spirit inhabiting the *kuala*, guardian of the well-being of the kin or

family, was referred to as either *Mudor* or *Voršud* (Mixeev 1900: 898). It is not a coincidence that M. G. Atamanov (1977: 33, 34, 37) actually equated the god *Voršud* and *Mu*, assuming that the term *mudor* referred to the *kuala*, the building or habitation of the female guardian of the kin, *Mu-Voršud*. Northern Udmurts refer to the Great Kin Sanctuary as *voršud kuala* and Udmurts living beyond the Vyatka River refer to it as *mudor kuala* (Atamanov 1988: 23–24).

Descriptions of the ritual *Mudor syuan* ['The Wedding of Mudor'] have been preserved. For example, among Udmurts of the Mamadyš District, the god *Voršud* was transported to a new location as a bride with a pair of horses with bells, and women wore *budzym dis'* (будӟым дись) ['wedding dresses']. It was assumed that following the accomplishment of this ritual, the god *Voršud* would inhabit the new *kuala* and worship could take place there. This ritual was referred to in different ways in different areas: *mudor syuan* or *korka syuan*.[16] One may assume that in the process of this ceremony, which was enacted in the form of a wedding, *Mudor* assumed the role of the groom and *Voršud* was in the role of the bride.

P. M. Bogaevskij described an interesting legend concerning the origin of the hearth god *Voršud* from *Mudor*, collected from Udmurts of the village of Pars'gurt in the Sarapul' District. The *Mudor*, god of the big river, had children, the guardians of little rivers, *vožo*s (вожо). These guardians became *voršud*s, guardians of families, when new families appeared on the river. There are also legends of both *Voršud* and *Mudor* originating from a human being, from the sons of Zerpal (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 98–100.) According to Bogaevskij (1890 IV: 83, 137), although *Mudor* was equated with *Voršud*, nonetheless the term *voršud* was more often used to refer to the god of a family sanctuary, whereas *Mudor* was used to refer to the god of the kin-group. In 1895, N. Tezjakov observed that there were special female *voršud*s in Bol'šegondyr District of the former Osinskij County: in one *kuala*, there were two *voršud*-chests; men prayed before one, women before the other (Zelenin 1980: 129). Perhaps these two different chests may have symbolized *Voršud* and *Mudor*. According to Udmurts, *Mudor* and *Voršud* could appear in anthropomorphic form in dreams, and more specifically, they invariably appeared as Udmurts (Bogaevskiĭ 1890 IV: 87–88).

Invu

The etymology of the name *Invu* (Инву) is from a compound of *in*/*inm*- (ин/инм-) ['sky, heaven, celestial'] and *vu* (ву) ['water, aquatic'], giving the meaning "celestial water". It is no coincidence that in the end of the 19th century, *Invu* was identified as a god of rain (Bogaevskij 1888: 14–64, Vereščagin 1889). According to V. E. Vladykin, *Invu* is the Mother of Celestial Water, who guarantees the well-being of the kin and family, and her image is rooted in the depths of the mythology. In the past, during family worship, there was not a single incantation which went without mention of *Invu*. There was a special sacred Melody of the Search for Celestial Water (Инву утчан гур), which was played by female *guslar*s on a *büdzum krez'*

(Быдӟым крезь) [‘great krez’] (Vladykin 1994: 71). The *büdzum krez*’ and the *dumbro krez*’ are traditional Udmurt harp-like instruments. Indeed, in prayer texts, the god of the kin sanctuary was addressed, *Oste Budzim Ine-Vue!* (Остэ Будзим Инэ-Вуэ!) [‘Lord/Almighty Great *Invu*!’] (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 82–83).

The Relations of Mudor and Invu

Mudor and *Invu* were interchangeable gods. At the end of the 19th century, most Udmurts placed *Invu* near *Mudor* or completely conflated *Mudor* and *Invu*, considering them one and the same god inhabiting the kin sanctuary (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 82–83). In some *kualas*, *Mudor* was completely forgotten and sacrifices were made exclusively in honour to *Invu*. P. M. Bogaevskij made the following proposal:

> the god *Invu* fused with *Mudor*, who to a great extent had the character of being exclusively a kin god, because the latter god – guardian of this area where the river flows, personified it, and showed belongingness to the kin gods by his cult; *Mudor* is also a guardian of that kin-group, which lives in the god’s territory [...]. (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 87–88.)

Bogaevskij pointed out that in prayers, *Mudor* appeared as the god of a big river and there is evidence in the prayer texts which indicates the equivalence of *Invu* and *Mudor*, for example:

> Blessed *Invu*, great *Lumda* (name of the river) *Mudor*! Smooth and smooth is the spring of your big river; there are plenty of reeds in this spring. Round and full are your willows there. Come down to us, Great *Lumda Mudor*, receive us to yourself, Great *Lumda Mudor*. We pray and ask you, our Great *Invu* [...]. (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 87–88.)

What is significant in the examples above is that the mentioned gods (*Invu* and *Mudor*) played the role of guardians of the territory, and furthermore the guardians of the kin who lived in this territory. It may be noted that Southern Udmurts primarily addressed *Mudor* while Northern Udmurts addressed *Invu*.

According to the conceptions of some, *Mudor* and/or *Invu* did not live in the Great Kuala during the summer: in this period they flew away across the flowers like bees and spread their power everywhere. Then at night, the gods returned to the kin sanctuary like bees returning to the hive. According to others, *Mudor* completely abandoned the sanctuary during the summer and only returned in the haymaking season. There was varying information about how long he was gone in different areas. The Udmurts of the village of Juski (in the present day Zavjalovo District), who were officially Christians, said that the *Voršud* of the family *kuala* “got out onto the flowers” (like bees?) like *Mudor* and *Invu* during Easter; people expected the *Voršud*’s return on the eve of Whitsuntide, and for this occasion they made special prayers (Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 86–87, 96).

According to the beliefs of Udmurts, the spirits of the *kuala* could appear very often in an anthropomorphic form and only rarely in another form. People assumed that there could be many spirits in anthropomorphic form called *voršud*s in one and the same *kuala*. According to one story, three *voršud*s in white clothes came to one person from the *kuala* around midnight: one was an unbearded young man, the second was also young but already had his beard, and the third was a woman (Vereščagin 1889: 175–176, Bogaevskij 1890, IV: 95–96).

On the basis of the presented data concerning relationships between the gods *Voršud*, *Mudor* and *Invu* that inhabit the kin *kuala*, it is possible to postulate the following possible explanations. As was correctly pointed out by researchers, *Voršud* was the god that was the guardian of the wellbeing of a particular family or kin. It is possible that in ancient times, the god *Voršud* was a female figure, and its origin is potentially connected to a cult of a female progenitor from those times when family relationships were approached matrilineally – i.e. when genealogies were traced through female rather than male kin. Evidence of this is manifested in the relationship of *Voršud* with the god of fertility, *Kyldysin*, as well as in the cult of the ancestors and ancient female names of kin-groups, and so forth. Later, in a manner paralleling *Kyldysin*, *Voršud* may have become a male god and association with *Voršud* began to be assessed patrilineally – i.e. according to male kin as "[t]he cult of matrilineal family kin sanctuaries naturally seceded its place to the cult of patrilineal kin" (Vladykin 1994: 288–289).

Extant evidence such as etymologies, details of preserved legends and cult features show that *Mudor* was not simply the god of a local river, stone or tree, but was rather the master of the local area, a special sacred center of a kin's territory (i.e. the territory inhabited by a certain kin-group). In addition, it shows that *Mudor* was related to the water element on the horizontal axis (the world river?) and also with the celestial and chthonic spheres on the vertical axis (the world tree?). *Mudor* could be approached as a male god. It may not be accidental that sanctifying a new *kuala* established in a new territory was organized in the form of a symbolic wedding between the guardian of the kin-group, *Voršud*, and master or spirit of the new territory, *Mudor*. It may be observed that the bride *Voršud* was symbolically driven from the old *kuala* and married to this *Mudor*, and the *voršud*-chest with all of its contents assumed the quality of the dowry of the bride. Later, the deeper meaning of this ritual, the *mudor syuan* (as a wedding of *Mudor* and *Voršud*) may have been lost. The outcome of the symbolic wedding ceremony between *Mudor* and *Voršud* generated something akin to a divine couple who guard the family or kin-group. Consequently, the Udmurt conception of a man, woman and young man (their son?) as inhabitants of the *kuala* is logical. Clear depictions of ancient legends of this type could potentially be represented on cult tablets found in Prikam'e. These present images of a family consisting of two or three members – an adult male, an adult female, and a child of uncertain gender (Oborin & Čagin 1988), which could reflect concepts of the spirit guardians of the family and kin-group.

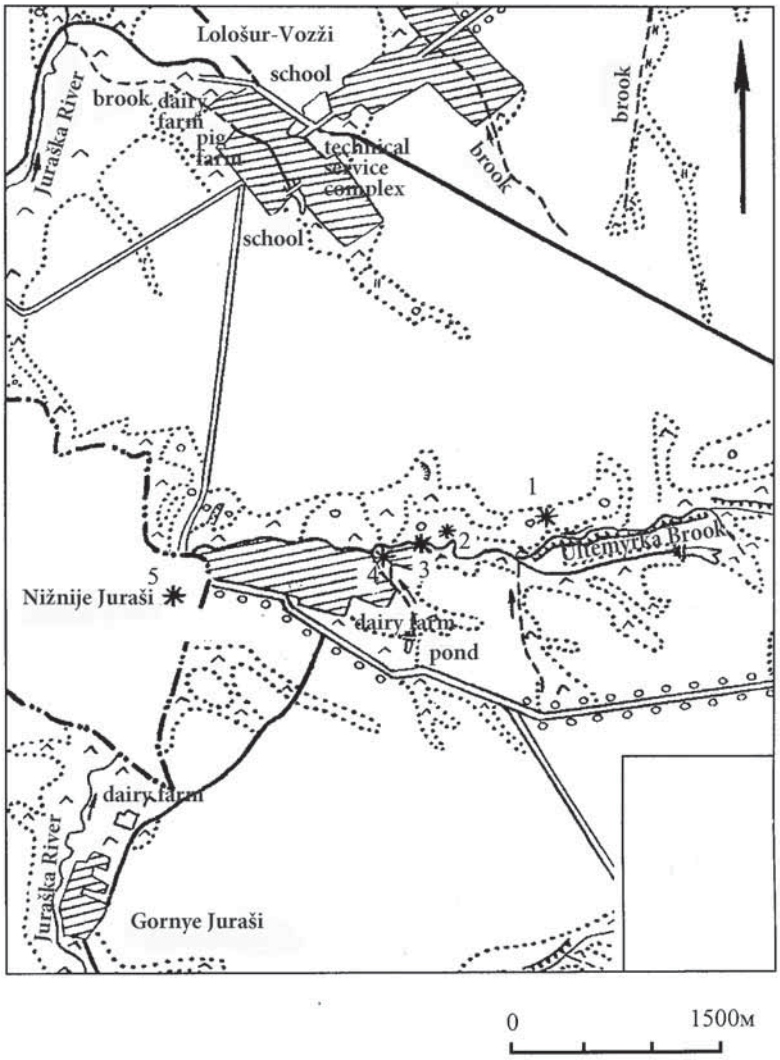
Invu is the only god in the *kuala* who has a direct relationship to a celestial element, the celestial water. This god probably symbolized the sacred

celestial center of a certain kin-group. However, if we take into account the fact that concepts of *Invu* and *Mudor* were often interchangeable, it may be assumed that *Invu* was related to the middle sphere, but also potentially with the chthonic sphere and the aquatic sphere. Folkloric and ethnographic data from the end of the 19th to the 20th centuries exhibit different causes for variation in the meaning of each of the three gods discussed here: in the beliefs of one local group of Udmurts, the main role was assumed by *Voršud*, in the beliefs of another the worship of *Mudor* was more prominent, and legends about *Invu* were only preserved in a few areas.

It is therefore possible to point out that, according to traditional Udmurt conceptions, the kin-group gods *Voršud*, *Mudor* and *Invu* were beings of the middle world of the earth. *Voršud* guaranteed a connection between different generations of relatives. *Mudor* and/or *Invu* were responsible for the well being of members of the kin-group or the kin collective which inhabited a local territory. In addition, they also symbolized the sacred center of this territory which was related to all three cosmic spheres (through their relation to the tree, river and celestial water). Images and functions of these three guardians of kin-groups reflect conceptions of a close relationship and interdependence of groups of human beings with nature in their environs including all three levels of the universe, and also conceptions of a relationship and interdependences between generations of the human population (the living, dead ancestors, and future generations).

Bulda and the Sacred Site near the Udmurt Village Nižnie Juraši

In the surroundings of the village Nižnie Juraši (Graxovo District, Republic of Udmurtia), the largest sanctuary of *Bulda* is called *Buldavös'*.[17] *Buldavös'* was located on the high hill, Jyrašgurez' (Buldagurez'), one and a half kilometres east-northeast from the border of the village, downstream along the Ultèmirka River, on the most elevated of part of its right shore (see Map 1.1). The name *Bulda* was used for a clearing in which prayers were made, and also for the nearby ravine (*Bulda gop*). According to informants, this place had been an oak forest at one time, but now the slopes of the hill are covered with pine trees. The clearing where prayer took place was approximately 200 x 100 meters in the middle of the forest. Earlier, oaks, linden trees, maples and nut trees grew here. The area around the prayer place is very beautiful. Now, the most sacred location in this holy place is a circle the size of a house covered with old maples, and there were also oaks close by. According to informants, this place was fenced and towels were tied around its edge. Pledge-offerings – towels (*čuškon'os*), tablecloths, cloth headdresses which had been kept in trunks – are placed on one of the maples. Food is placed in front of the maples. Money which had been washed in water was thrown in a hole near one of the maples while asking for health. It was forbidden to take these coins. These rituals were primarily practiced by women. Nothing on this plain should be touched or *Bulda* would send harm on the perpetrator.



Map 1. Map of the surroundings of the village of Nižnie Juraši, Graxovo District, Republic of Udmurtia, Russian Federation. 1. Bulda or Budzym vös' (Будзым вӧсь) ['Great Sanctuary']; 2. Šoryn vösjas'kon (Шорын вӧсяськон) ['Middle Sanctuary']; 3. Piči vös' (Пичи вӧсь) ['Little Sanctuary'] or Valče vösjas'kon (Валче вӧсяськон) ['Common Sanctuary']; 4. The Great Kuala; 5. Kur kuyan.

What made this place sacred was that in olden times someone had had a vision: a person came from the forest and asked to be brought *viro sëton* (виро сётон) ['blood-sacrifice']. It is also told that long ago *Bulda* was brought from somewhere in the direction of Alnaš – i.e. the neighbouring Alnaš District, approximately fifty kilometers from Nižnie Juraši. Because of this, the sanctuary here was sometimes called *Alnaš vös'* (Алнаш вӧсь). In ancient times, old people went to Alnaš to pray, but it was too far away, and therefore they decided to make their own prayer place, and thus they

brought ashes from the hearth of the sacred place of Alnaš (Atamanov 1997: 124–125). For three years, *Bulda* was carried by a troika, circumnavigating the source of each river and stream the troika met. They could not cross over any river or stream because *Bulda* would have become useless and lost its power – *inez uz lu* (инез уз лу). According to one version of the legend, the host of the sacred site, *Bulda* or *Buldamurt*, was imagined as a tall or elderly person in white who walks Buldagurez' Hill. They say that *Bulda* came by himself across three years, avoiding crossing rivers and streams, only travelling on dry land.[18] A second version is that the highest head *Bulda* was a spruce tree. According to one group of informants, this tree had already dried out and fallen owing to its great age and now there are no spruce trees in this place. According to another group of informants, this dried spruce is still standing in the circle (it was not there in 1998). (Volkova 1999: 206–208.)[19] This spruce tree was called *Bulda babaj* (Булда бабай) ['grandfather *Bulda*'] and *Bulda babaj kuz* (Булда бабай кыз) ['spruce of grandfather *Bulda*']. In a third version, *Bulda* was imagined as an oak tree, which was brought from the direction of Alnaš and which is still growing on the hill. If *Bulda* was transferred from another site, sacred objects probably accompanied *Bulda* in this process – the *Bulda sandyk* ['*Bulda* chest'] with towels, belts, head-scarves and so forth.

Buldamurt was held to be a god, guardian of Udmurts, the holy assistant of the main god *Inmar* (*Buldamurt so Inmar palas', svjatoj porma*). This last conception perhaps formed under the influence of Christian ideas. He was thought to have great holy power. It was said that even during the great fire that occurred in Nižnie Juraši in 1930, when all of the other houses and buildings were on fire, the *Bulda kenos* (Булда кенос) ['barn of Bulda'] was not – not until something like a little star fell from the sky under this barn, after which, the barn started to burn. A person could not put on clothes from the *Bulda* chest because then the person would have the feeling that someone was pulling them off of him or her. To see *Bulda* was not a good omen. The lord of the sacred place was vindictive. He could send diseases when he was displeased: he could make people twisted or give them boils and so forth. It is possible to see visions in that place.

According to information collected in 1987, a white ram was sacrificed and wheat porridge was eaten on St Peter's Day. It was necessary to go to sauna on the evening of the day before worship. Before worship, nothing impure, nothing bad was done, and no one had intimate relations with his wife. On the first day, a duck was killed; on the second, an ewe was sacrificed; on the third, prayer was accompanied by playing on the violin (*koskam krez'*); on the fourth, prayer was in the forest; on the fifth, a goose was killed. Grain, flour, butter, eggs and money were collected from eighteen surrounding villages to buy an ewe for the ritual. The food was sold and the sacrificial animal was purchased with this money. Every twelve years, a calf and colt were sacrificed there.[20]

Every three years, ritual ceremonies were conducted here on St Peter's Day. However, if there were an illness or other crisis, a sacrifice could be made every year with a white duck or goose on Easter or on St Peter's Day. Individuals with requests or giving pledges could come at any time.

The animal could be sacrificed during the communal worship, and the person who performed the sacrifice belonged to a different *böljak* (бöляк) ['patronymy']. In the autumn, on the Day of the Protection of the Virgin Mary, sacrificial priests came to bid farewell to *Bulda* and sacrifice a goose or duck to him. At the present time, sacrificial rituals are held regularly once every three years. Sacrificed animals are white male geese, ducks, sheep and calves. According to some informants, there were special cases in which black animals and birds were sacrificed. Coloured animals were not to be sacrificed. The skin of the sacrificed animal had to be sold to outsiders and could not be used in the home.

Pledges were given by people in whose home an illness or other crisis occurred. This person would first go to a *pelljas'kis'* (пелляськись) ['healer'] for advice. If the healer believed that the illness was caused by the displeasure of *Bulda*, he counselled the victim to pledge a sacrifice of some animal to the god if the god would provide him with aid. In three years, this might happen to four people, who then provided animals and birds for the common ritual. For example, V. I. Okunev (born 1950) hurt himself badly while mowing hay in the ravine of *Bulda*; he was ill for a long time afterward. Following his mother's advice, he went to *Bulda* and hung pledge-money on a tree branch as a pledge and promised to sacrifice a ram in the event that he would get better. (Volkova 1999: 206–208.)

The communal sacrifice began in the yard of the *töro* (тöро) ['honoured leader'] Hariton-*daj*.[21] On the morning of the feast of welcoming spring called *akaška*, the whole family came into the yard carrying plates with bread, porridge, eggs and butter in their hands. They stood before the rising sun and asked *Inmar* for warm rain for the well-being of the people, and asked for protection from fire and disasters. Then they came into the house and sat down to eat. Neighbours also came to collect money for the animal for the next sacrifice.

Worship continued after that in the sanctuary in the middle of the clearing. In the sacred circle, among oak and linden trees, sat *töro* Hariton-*daj* with a towel on his neck and he directed the proceedings. The *vösjasi* (вöсяси) ['sacrificial priests'] were Čimok-*babaj*, Oleg-*babaj* and Sergej-*babaj*, and they did whatever Hariton-*daj* told them to. They stood in the same place, in the middle of the sacred circle. On their hands they held a towel, on the towel plates with bread and meat. The other people stood around this place in a circle. The sacrificial priests walked in a circle three times, taking turns raising bread, *kumyška* (home-distilled hard liquor) and plates with meat and porridge. They asked that cattle would thrive and people would be healthy. From time to time, one of the sacrificial priests cried, *Jybyrttè!* (Йыбырттэ) ['Bow and pray!'], and everyone there got to their knees and prayed. According to one account, the sacrificial priest invoked *Inmar – Bulda vös' vösjas'kom, inmarlès' kuris'kom* (Булда вöсь вöсяськом, инмарлэсь куриськом) ['We pray to *Bulda vös'* and ask *Inmar*']. According to another view, the request (*kuris'kon*) was addressed to *Bulda*, asking that he protect his people in the coming year (Лыктӥсь арозь ӟеч возьма ини) and that he make life easy, that the year will provide a good harvest, that the number of cattle increase and that people will not be ill. With these words,

everyone got to their knees and bowed. At the worshipping rituals, although there was drinking, no one became drunk, and the sacrificial priests did not drink at all (Volkova 1999: 206–208). Praying continued from morning until evening for a few days. On departing, people crossed themselves and said, "Protect us until the next year." Religious ceremonies were accompanied by playing on a *dombro krez'* (домбро крезь) (the traditional Udmurt harp-like instrument) or on a *koskam krez'* (коскам крезь) ['violin']. There was a special ritual melody without words called a *Bulda gur*. The *dombro krez'* was made from a spruce tree which was struck by lightning. Men played on the *bydzym krez'* (Быдзым крезь) ['great *dombro krez*"], and women on the small *dombro krez'*. During the worship, the sacrificial priests faced south, toward the sun. (Atamanov 1997: 124–125.)

The *töro* could be an old, appreciated person who knows the organization of the ritual. During the worship, Hariton-*babaj* was crying. It was said that *Bulda bördytytè val* (Булда бӧрдытытэ вал), the lord of this sanctuary, put him in this condition. In the process of the ritual ceremony, the participants probably experienced some form of spiritual purification (catharsis). The *töro* experienced this more strongly as the person who was closest to the sphere of the divine, and the person with the mediating function between the human society and the world of the gods. According to his daughter-in-law, K. M. Haritonova (born 1937), his grand-daughter, A. T. Suvorova (born 1942), and according to all people who knew him, the famous *töro* Hariton-*babaj* – Hariton Aleksandrovič Aleksandrov (born 1898) – was an exceptionally good person – as good as the god *Inmar* – no one ever heard a bad word from him, ever saw him commit a bad deed; everyone loved him and appreciated him.

Objects sacrificed during ritual ceremonies (towels, tablecloths, etc.) were hung in the sacred place. Between ritual festivals, these objects were preserved in the yard of the head sacrificial priest or of the *töro* Hariton-*daj* in a chest (according to other versions there were two, three or many chests) in a special storehouse where most people could not go. Towels, pieces of fabric, tablecloths, ritual dress, headscarves, belts, small pillows, dishes (cups, spoons) were placed in this trunk (or in those trunks). It was said that all of these ritual objects were burned following the death of Hariton-*daj*, but according to his daughters, they were simply destroyed in a fire that consumed the storehouse. At the order of the sacrificial priests and the *töro*, all of the objects in this trunk were washed in the Juraška River before the common ceremony, three days before St Peter's Day. There could be as many as thirty participants in this activity. It was a joyous and boisterous celebration. Horses with bells were driven to the river; Mitya-*babaj* played the violin. When the elders decided to stop the sacrificing, all valuable and beautifully embroidered things were sold and a huge celebration was organized for the whole village with big tables, food and merry-making. It was said that the ritual *šur kuzja lèzizy* (шур кузя лэзизы) ['was allowed to pass away on the water']. In the present day, sacrificed objects are tied on a tree in the sacred place.

Ritual ceremonies were organized in the sanctuary of *Bulda* by the people from nearby villages, such as Nižnie Juraši (Udm. Jyraš), Poršur,

Jatči (Затча), Batyrevo (Tylo), Gornyj Juraš (Tally), Mamaevo (Vynlud/Vylnud), Lološur-Vozži (Vožoj), Panovo (Pangurt), Sarajkino and Saramak. Udmurts called the sanctuary of *Bulda*, *Bydzym vös'* (Быдзым вӧсь) ['Great Sanctuary']. It was said that before the October Revolution, the only place in the whole of Jelabuga where this worship of *Bulda* wäs conducted, was here, near Nižnie Juraši. On St Peter's Day, people came from surrounding districts with troikas; it was joyous like a market day (Atamanov 1997: 124–125). Russians (relatives, friends) also participated in the ritual ceremonies. Men and women went there, but women did not have the right to sanctify bread or pray with bread, owing to their reproductive functions.

The Situation of Sacred Sites Surrounding the Udmurt Village Nižnie Juraši

In order of significance, the next most important sacred place near the Village of Nižnie Juraši was *Šoryn vösjas'kon* (Шорын вӧсяськон) ['Middle Sanctuary'], situated 200 meters to the northeast from the bowery in a clearing like a hollow in the base of the hill on the right shore of the Ultèmirka River (Map 1.2). Here stands a lonesome linden tree. Worship lasts for two days. If shepherds fall asleep in this place, they see different kinds of dreams. One woman had a vision of a grey-haired old man who walked past her and said three times, "Betrayal to you, girl." In that year, a lot of things happened to her: she gave birth to a child and she was sick for a long time. When she met the old man, she did not feel anything, and she was only frightened later. This sacred place was the middle place in many senses: according to its social significance, according to turns in organizing ceremonies and how long they last; also according to the topography of this place, which is situated between two higher hills and the flowing river below it, and also according to its place between the Great (*Bulda*) and Little Sanctuaries.

Piči vös' (Пичи вӧсь) ['Little Sanctuary'] or *Valče vösjas'kon* (Валче вӧсяськон) ['Common Sanctuary'] is situated on the edge of the farm behind the garden of A. T. Suvorova, on the little hollow, *udmurt gop* (удмурт гоп) [literally 'Udmurt Hollow'], on the left shore of the same river, diagonally across from the previous sanctuary (Map 1.3). At some point there was a building on this site. Worship took place on a single day, eating *kuarnjan'* (куарнянь) – flatbread without salt.

Going upstream along the Ultèmirka River, on its left shore was a wooden building on the edge of the village. This was the common sacred place of the village, called The Great Kuala (Map 1.4). It was said that a large pine tree with a trunk one meter in diameter stood near the *kuala*. According to one version, the pine was cut by strangers, who also dismantled the *kuala*. It was also told that their deeds were later punished: they went to prison. According to the other version, the pine was cut by a travelling merchant; he felt bad because of that. No one has prayed at this place for a long time. Almost no one remembers it now. In the present day, during the summer before Pentecost, people come to this place to eat porridge – *guždoržuk*

(гуждоржук). They boil eggs so that the rains will come on time and the crops will be good. When it has not rained for a long time, old men come and clean the springs around the village – *ošmes tazato* (ошмес тазато) [literally 'they make the springs healthier']. Belief in these rituals is so strong that even Russians from surrounding villages ask Udmurts to perform their worship and call the rain during drought or other bad weather conditions.

Beyond the village, *kur kuyan* is situated downstream along the Ultemirka River (Map 1.5). Belongings of the dead were thrown there. The bones of sacrificed animals were also brought there following the memorial ritual for the ancestors called *jyr-pyd sëton* (йыр-пыд сётон) [literally 'head-legs sacrifice/offering'].

The topography of the places described above, how those places are situated in relation to the village, river and elevation of the area, correspond to their level of sacrality and status in the system of beliefs of the local inhabitants. The sanctuary of *Bulda*, dedicated to the most powerful god-protector, is situated on the most elevated location in the topography and it is also set upriver from the village Nižnie Juraši. The less significant cult places, the Middle and Little Sanctuaries, were also integrated into the larger ritual ceremony for the worship of *Bulda*. They were also placed upriver, but the Middle Sanctuary was between the Great Sanctuary and the Little Sanctuary in its social significance and as a concrete manifestation according to its relationships to both natural and cultural objects. The Little Sanctuary had an even lower status and was connected to a hollow. The sacred *kuala* was also situated upriver on the edge of the village and on the lower part of its left shore. Information about the last three holy places has scarcely been preserved. This is probably connected to the dying out of the cult in those locations and increase in the worship of *Bulda*. The sacred places of lower status, associated with funerary and memorial rituals for ancestors, were situated downstream.

Worship of the deity *Bulda* appears to be a later phenomenon that is connected to the habitation area of Udmurts living in the southern parts of present-day Udmurtia (in the Alnašskij, Malopurginskij, Graxovskij, Kiznerskij, Kijasovskij and, Možginskij Districts). Sanctuaries of *Bulda* played a role as spiritual centers for this territorial group of the southern Udmurt population with a function of ethno-consolidation. For this population, the cult of the clan-group's *Bulda* served as one of the most important features of ethno-identity. Sanctuaries of larger networks of relations and territorial sanctuaries were found among Zavjatskij Udmurts (Lake Lyzi and the sanctuary of Nyr'inskij), Slobodskij Udmurts (the sanctuary of Inmala), Glazovskij Udmurts (the sanctuary of Gubervös') and so forth. Sanctuaries of clan-groups were characterized by worship among networks of kin relations whereas territorial sanctuaries were characterized by worship among groups of neighbouring communities, but with the passage of time, the differences between these types of sanctuaries are gradually disappearing. Communal sacral centers and the cult of the mighty gods reveal earlier processes of consolidation and the formation of larger ethno-territorial groups of Udmurts. As was typical, these ethno-territorial groups were founded on the recognition of relationships between clan-

groups indicative of common origins of the population. There is no evidence for the existence of a sanctuary shared by all Udmurt groups, a fact which correlates well with the level of development of the Udmurt ethnos in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Conclusion

On the whole, it can be observed that from the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century, representations of guardian deities of the Udmurts, their functions and images realizing their appearances, vary significantly among different local groups and changed over time. The images of different deities are superimposed, and the spheres of influence of different gods and guardian spirits are not always clearly distinguished. The obscurity of the portrayal offered here is to some degree a reflection of the quality of the sources available for beliefs and ritual practices. These are only fragments of the pre-Christian religious tradition that had been vital in an earlier era, and yet was subject to inevitable transformations over time, losing and conflating many specific details. However, in many respects, the elasticity and contradictions of the religious pantheon can be explained by the very essence of the pre-Christian worldview of the Udmurts; by their religious consciousness that mitigated sharp distinctions and allowed or even presupposed the development of multiple, parallel realizations of one and the same mythic figure.

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NOTES

1 E.g. Ryčkov 1770, Georgi 1799, Vereščagin 1886, 1889, Pervuxin 1888–1890, Bogaevskij 1888, 1890, Gavrilov 1880, 1891, Holmberg 1914, 1927.
2 In 1998, I. M. Nurijeva and I were guided among the sacred places by A.T. Suvorova (born 1942), the granddaughter of Hariton-Babaj, the *töro* (тöро) ['honoured leader'] of the praying to Bulda.
3 According to V. E. Vladykin (1994: 272–273), a *kuala* is space domesticated by human beings, and a symbol of the house or home.
4 On the religious/mythological institution of *Voršud*, see further Atamanov 1977: 22–40, Vladykin 1994: 273–279.
5 For the contents of a *voršud*-chest, see Pervuxin 1888 I: 26–31. "A *voršud*-chest with all of its contents was 'the beginning of the beginning' for Udmurts; a religious mythological model and guarantee of the stability of the world order" (Vladykin 1994: 283).
6 E.g. Pervuxin 1888–1890, Smirnov 1890: 216, Bogaevskij 1890, IV: 96–97.
7 On representations of *Voršud*, see further D. K. Zelenin 1980, M. G. Atamanov 1983.
8 Košurnikov 1880: 20–21, Smirnov 1890: 162, Buch 1882: 165–168, Luppov 1899: 247, 1911a: 39, 57, 88–89, Emel'janov 1921: 44–45, Atamanov 1977: 35, 1983: 113, 1997: 123.

9 Xudjakov 1933: 253, Košurnikov 1880: 20–21, Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 131–133, Smirnov 1890: 162, Luppov 1911a: 39, 57, 88–89, Emel'janov 1921: 44–45, Atamanov 1977: 35, 1983: 113, 1997: 123.
10 Pervuxin 1888, I: 23, Bogaevskij 1890 IV: 97; Emel'janov 1921: 45, Atamanov 1977: 34.
11 Kuznetsov 1904: 33, Emel'janov 1921: 45.
12 Bexterev 1880: 159, Atamanov 1983: 113, 1997: 123.
13 Cf. *my* (мы), *mupyj* (мупый), *mumy* (мумы), *memi* (меми).
14 The Zavjatsk' Udmurts inhabit the western side of the lower Vjatka River in the Kukmorskij and Baltasinskij Districts of the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation.
15 On the etymology of the special vocative term *oste*, see Napolskix 1997: 117–118.
16 E.g. Bogaevskij 1890: 158, Gavrilov 1891: 140–141, Holmberg 1927: 123, Emel'janov 1921: 47–53.
17 'Bulda' is a personal name of Turkic origin: *bulda* < *buldy* ['enough; that is it; it is over'?] (Atamanov 1997: 206).
18 This is according to the informant R. A. Čurakova in 1987. I would like to thank R. A. Čurakova for the valuable information provided about *Bulda* worship.
19 I would like to take the opportunity to thank L. A. Volkova for providing me with materials concerning *Bulda* worship from her 1992 fieldwork.
20 According to the informant R. A. Čurakova.
21 *babaj*, *dadaj*, *daj* derive from *dadaj*, which itself derives from Udmurt *agaj* (агай) ['older brother; uncle'] (Russian *dadja*, *ded*, ['uncle, grandfather'], Tatar *babaj* (бабай) ['grandfather']).

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Arja Ahlqvist

Blue Stones in the Context of Traditions of Worshiping Stones in Former Finno-Ugric Territories of Central Russia*

Синий камень, Синий камень,
Синий камень пять пудов.
Синий камень так не тянет,
как проклятая любовь.[1]

Many objects in nature, such as sacred stones, springs, lakes, ponds, trees, hills and so forth, have been found to have cultic functions in the territory of Central Russia, the former lands of ancient Finno-Ugrian peoples such as the Merjas known from Russian chronicles. Information on these cultic objects was collected in the course of research on the region's place names. I first began systematic fieldwork for the collection of linguistic (primarily toponymic) data and other aspects of the intangible cultural heritage of the former Finno-Ugric habitation areas of Central Russia at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. The materials discussed in this paper were collected during my own fieldwork from 1989 to 2011, and also during a project under my supervision for the research of the Finno-Ugric

* The main points in this paper have been published in Russian in Ahlqvist 2005, 2006. These papers are only cited where they contain additional concrete information relevant to this discussion. I would like to thank the Academy of Finland for the financial support, with which my fieldwork has primarily been carried out. The most recent data used in this paper was obtained during fieldwork in 2010 and 2011, conducted with the support of the Academy of Finland (Grant No. 137601). I would especially like to express my gratitude to all of the local people and local historians who provided the most valuable assistance to our fieldwork group when looking for and investigating cult stones. Simultaneously, I am very grateful to the archaeologists Christian Carpelan, Pirjo Uino (Helsinki) and A. E. Leont'ev (Moscow) for their assessments of some of the cup-marked stones as well as to the historian and researcher of cult stones S. B. Černetsova (Jaroslavl') for providing me with her data on some of the cult stones which she had researched. I am also very grateful to the geographer Kaisa Kepsu (Helsinki) for drawing the map for this publication. To the folklorists, Eila Stepanova and Frog, my great thanks for translating the original text of this paper from Russian into English, as well as for their useful comments on the text.

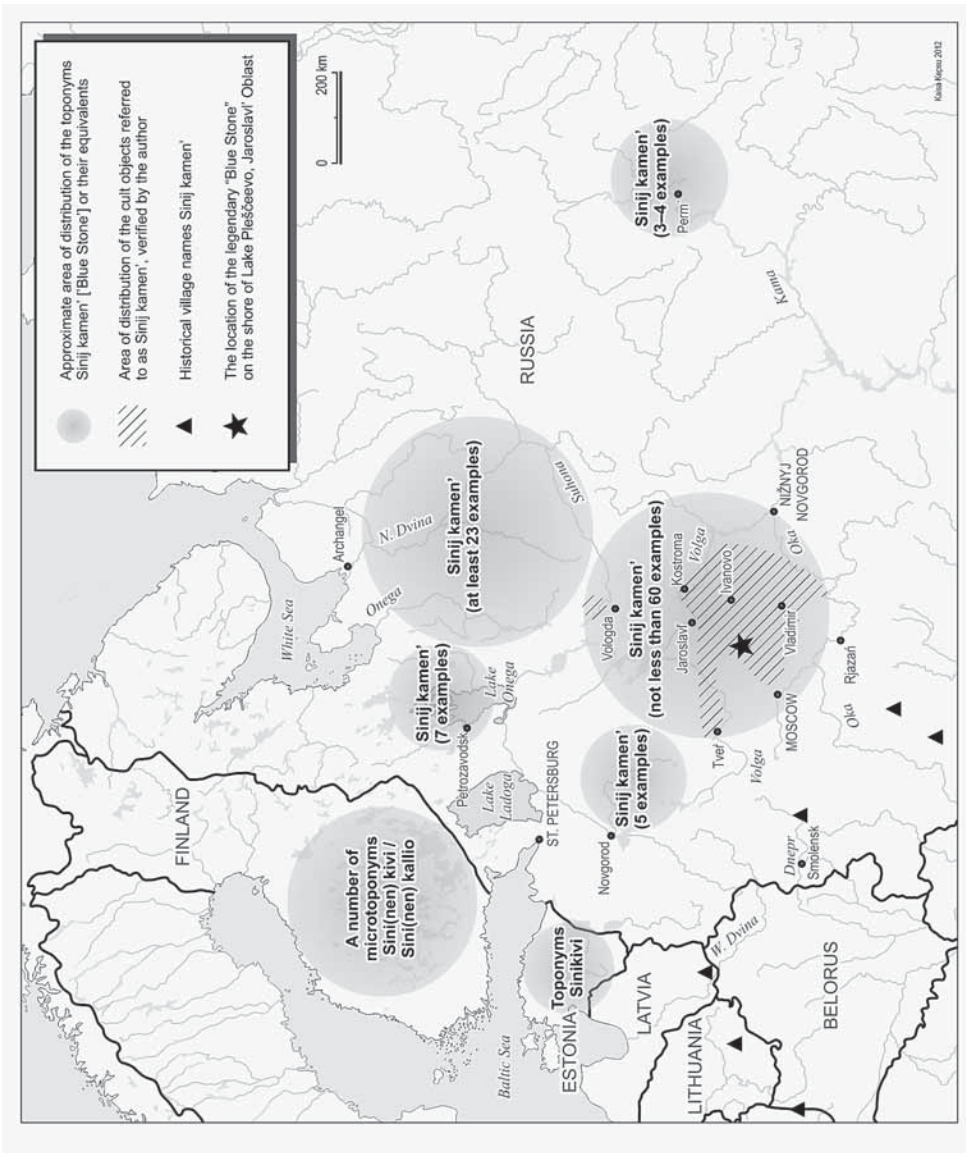
substratum in Central Russia conducted from 1995 to 1998, funded by the Academy of Finland.

This systematic fieldwork was carried out in the Merja territories of the chronicles, or more specifically the region of the two great lakes, Lake Nero and Lake Pleščeevo, in the Rostov and Pereslavl' Districts of the Jaroslavl' Oblast, and the areas surrounding them. According to archaeological evidence, the territory of Merja habitation was extremely large, parts of which have been researched in limited detail. This territory covered the majority of the present-day Jaroslavl' Oblast, significant portions of the Ivanovo, Vladimir and Kostroma Oblasts, as well as adjacent territories of the Moscow, Tver', and Vologda Oblasts (see Leont'ev 1996: map 26, 269, 292). Additional materials were also collected from the habitation areas of the ancient Muroma and Meščera peoples in the Vladimir and Rjazan' Oblasts.[2] Cult stones are found in all of the territories which were subject to investigation, and particularly concentrated in the Merja territories of the chronicles in the southern parts of the Jaroslavl' Oblast and adjacent districts of the Ivanovo and Vladimir Oblasts. This may be explained at least in part by the fact that precisely these areas have been subject to the most concentrated research. When addressing the ancient Finno-Ugrian peoples of Central Russia, it is necessary to take into account the reality that discussion is not merely concerned with populations such as the Merja, Muroma and Meščera appearing in chronicles as inhabitants of these territories across the early Middle Ages, immediately prior to the Slavic colonization, but that it is also concerned with the peoples – primarily Finno-Ugric tribes – of earlier, pre-historic epochs. Central Russia's long history of habitation cannot be left aside when evaluating traditions of worshiping objects in nature.

Blue Stones: Areal Distribution and Situation in the Landscape

The most widespread type of cultic stone in Central Russia is the so-called *Sinij kamen'* (Синий камень), or 'Blue Stone'. In the territories under discussion, our fieldwork group has already identified about sixty stones referred to specifically as "Blue Stone" and locations bearing the corresponding toponym so far, and this can be supplemented by information from the studies of other researchers.[3] A significant number of Blue Stones discovered by our research group are situated in the central parts of the ancient Merjan territory, in the Jaroslavl', Ivanovo and Vladimir Oblasts. Information about Blue Stones was also obtained in the Kostroma Oblast, as well as on the peripheries of the Merjan territories mentioned above – beyond the city of Vologda and in the Kašinskij District (Tver' Oblast). However, the more research that is done in other regions, the more Blue Stones discovered there. Information on Blue Stones has also been documented outside of these Merjan territories not far from the City of Tver' and in Meščera, as well as on the peripheries of the former lands of the Muroma.

Other sources report Blue Stones in the Moscow Oblast (see e.g. Malanin 2004a, 2004b) and in the Toržok District, Tver' Oblast (Kurbatov 2000:



Map 1. The areal distribution of the "Blue Stone" toponymic model. The area of distribution of the toponyms Sinij kamen' ['Blue Stone'] in Central Russia and in the surroundings of the town Vologda is based on the author's own fieldwork (1989–2011). Information on corresponding phenomena in the Kama River basin derives from Galuško (1962); in the Novgorod Oblast from Šorin (1988); in Northern Russia from Matveev (1998a, 1998b); and in Zaonežje from Mullonen (2008). Analogical data from Finland is based on the materials held in the NA and MLKP archives, and from Estonia it derives from Kallasmaa (1996). The approximate locations of some toponyms, especially historical village named Sinij kamen' ['Blue Stone'] found in southwestern parts of the territory, are defined according to RGN and WRG, through the comparison of this information with cartographic materials (see also note 33).

187). In addition, Blue Stones are distributed farther away from Merja territories, for example: there are at least twenty-three examples in Northern Russia (Matveev 1998a: 72, 1998b: 97; cf. Ševelev 1996: 66); three or four examples of stones in the cliffs along the Kama River basin (Galuško 1962: 45); five examples from the Novgorod Oblast (Šorin 1988: 97); and seven examples in Zaonež'e are described by I. I. Mullonen (2008: 103). An analogical toponymic model also emerges in Finland, presenting a number of micro-toponyms – *Sinikivi*, *Sininen kivi* ['Blue Stone'], *Sinikallio*, *Sininen kallio* ['Blue Cliff'] (see NA, MLKP, Ahlqvist 1995: 17) – and toponyms corresponding to *Sinikivi* are also found in Estonia (see Kallasmaa 1996: 383). The area of distribution of the "Blue Stone" toponymic model is shown on the map in Map 1. It is clear that Blue Stones are not simply known "in a few spots in north-western and north-eastern Russia," as has been proposed (Aleksandrov 2000: 122).

Outside of the most famous and widely known Blue Stone situated on the shore of Lake Pleščeevo (discussed below), only some of the Blue Stones investigated during our fieldwork in Central Russia have a clear and direct connection to a geographical feature related to water.[4] In my research, I not only found Blue Stones or places bearing this name on the edges of swamps and less often lakes, in riverbeds, creekbeds, and ravines attached to river systems, but also on the slopes of hills, on level fields as well as elsewhere, often in remote forest wildernesses. Overall, the situation of Blue Stones in the landscape does not play a significant role. Places in which Blue Stones are situated are usually connected by only one common feature: a location which is relatively remote to the places of habitation with which they are associated (see Ahlqvist 1995: 12). Only in very few cases is there deviation from this convention, the majority of which can be easily explained as the result of human activity, as will be discussed below.

The Legendary Blue Stone on the Shore of Lake Pleščeevo

In order to open the questions surrounding Blue Stones, it is crucial to begin with an analysis of a concrete example, which is readily supplied by the most famous cult stone of this type, the Blue Stone situated at the foot of Aleksander's Hill on the shore of Lake Pleščeevo, Jaroslavl' Oblast, near the town of Pereslavl'-Zalesskij (see the location in Map 1 and Photos 1 and 2; see also the photo in Ahlqvist 1995: 30). An analysis of this example will acquaint the reader with the central points in the history of research on Blue Stones, which simultaneously emphasize the necessity of acknowledging the comprehensive scope of Blue Stones as a cultural phenomenon.

Photo 1. The legendary "Blue Stone" of Lake Pleščeevo (Jaroslavl' Oblast). Photo 1992.

Up until recently, the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo was the only cult stone of this type which was widely known in academic research, and in research literature on local areas in particular (see Ahlqvist 1995: 7ff.). Besides this stone, the only Blue Stone or Stone Woman (Каменная баба) that has been subject to widespread discussion is that of the Berendeevo Swamp on the border of the Jaroslavl' and Vladimir Oblasts (see e.g. Smirnov 1919, Ahlqvist 1995: 8–9, 15, Černecova 2006). This stone is still referred to as 'Blue Stone Woman' (Синяя каменная баба) (see e.g. Bakaev 1996: 90) very possibly as the result of a confusion of two cult stones situated on different sides of the swamp (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 8ff.). Near the town of Rostov Velikij (Jaroslavl' Oblast), a Blue Stone of the village of Trjaslovo on the eastern shore of Lake Nero was also known (see e.g. Fedotova 1987: 76–77, Ahlqvist 1995: 9, and discussion below). The Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo was first investigated by archaeologists in 1850, and in 1949, the stone acquired the status of a heritage object and received protection from the state, becoming one of the few cult stones of Central Russia subject to preservation (see *SPAYO*: 24, *AKYO*: 162). This boulder from the last Ice Age has traditionally been considered an object of worship of the Merjas in particular – "a Merjan god".[5] A corresponding opinion is encountered in treatments of the Blue Stone or Stone Woman of Berendeevo Swamp and the Blue Stone of the village of Trjaslovo, which is addressed as "witnesses to cult rituals of the pagan Merjas" (Fedotova 1987: 76–77).

This legendary Blue Stone continues to draw attention. In recent years, for example, a hypothesis that there were multiple cult stones on the shore of Lake Pleščeevo has emerged and begun developing. This hypothesis is very significant from the perspective of investigations into the history

Photo 2. The location of the legendary "Blue Stone" on the shore of Lake Pleščeevo. View from Aleksander´s Hill (Jaroslavl' Oblast). Photo 2006.

of the Blue Stone. A. M. Bakaev (1996: 88) proposes that the historical Blue Stone lies on the bottom of the lake and that the current Blue Stone is its "brother". Personally, I reached the conclusion that our generation is dealing with the authentic Blue Stone, but a portion of the historical data traditionally connected to this stone is actually concerned with another stone, which probably ended up on the bottom of Lake Pleščeevo. It is customary to view the earliest mention of the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo as appearing among the pages of *The Life of the Venerable Irinarx of Rostov* (*Жития Преподобного Иринарха*) from the beginning of the 17th century.[6] However, this view is based on a fundamental error: the stone in this source is nowhere identified as a "Blue Stone" (see *ŽPI*: 1373–1374), nor is it identified as a "Blue Stone" in any other known document – it is simply referred to as a "stone", which is in fact situated at quite a distance from the current Blue Stone. Source criticism has been significantly wanting across the long history of local historical and academic discussions on this subject.[7] At the present stage of research, it appears probable that there was an erroneous conflation of information about two separate cult stones situated on the northeast shore of Lake Pleščeevo. One of these stones is the current Blue Stone, still found in its original post-Ice Age position – or close to it (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 20, 27n.12) – while the *stone* situated in the ravine of a creek near the Borisoglebskij and the Nikitskij Monastaries, which was "inhabited by a demon" and drew people to itself from Pereslavl' who worshiped it (see *ŽPI*: 1373), should be considered to be a different cult object (see also Ahlqvist 2005: 101, 2006: 5–6; cf. Ahlqvist 1995: 19–20).

The distance between these two stones was not less than three and a half kilometers (see Komarov 2003: 426, illustration). Fieldwork has revealed

that separate sanctuaries belonging to the lands of neighbouring villages are quite often separated by similar distances from each other. Alongside the ancient fortified town of Kleščino, such a favourable place as the shoreline of Lake Pleščeevo also supported a few villages (see Leont'ev 1996: 47, Komarov 2003: 418, *AKYO*: 153ff.), which in those times would have had their own sanctuaries (see also Bakaev 1996: 88, Ahlqvist 1996: 254). One of these sanctuaries may have been communal, with greater renown, functioning as "the religious center of the area", in the words of K. I. Komarov (2003: 418). It is possible that the "stone" known from *The Life of the Venerable Irinarx of Rostov* was the object of just such a sanctuary.

In the early 17th century, Irinarx of Rostov decreed that the stone should be buried in the earth so that "Christian souls [...] do not visit the stone" (see *ŽPI*: 1373–1374). The next widely known mention of the stone comes from 1788, when the stone sank into the lake while being transported over the ice for the construction of a church in Duxovskaja Sloboda. It is customarily believed that, within a few decades, the stone reappeared on the shore of the lake – but on a different shore. This sort of "miracle" is explained by, among other things, the falling water level in the lake, movement attributable to pack ice or freezing and thawing at the bottom of the lake, as well as strong winds blowing toward the eastern shore.[8] However, can the movement of "The Stone of Borisogleb" to the current position of the Blue Stone really be explained by such hypotheses?

The hypothesis of movement due to ice can be addressed first. If the movement of ice in the spring drove the stone, then the stone would have had to travel no less than three and a half kilometers along the bottom of the lake during the approximately 60 years that it was submerged (cf. Komarov 2003: 422, 426 illustration). These circumstances do not change when another hypothesis attributes the movement of the stone to underwater ice in the autumn (see Berdnikov 1985: 138). In either case, the stone would have to travel approximately 60 meters per year along the bottom of the lake, or more specifically, 60 meters in a season – i.e. when the ice breaks up in the spring or in the course of freezing in the autumn. The hypothesis becomes still more suspicious if we take into account the strong argument put forward by V. Berdnikov (1985: 135 illustration, 138) that the stone most likely sank closer to the mouth of the Trubež River, where the ice would have been thinner owing to the currents of the river. However, the distance between this and the current location of the Blue Stone is even greater – no less than ca. five kilometers. In this case, it appears that the stone would have travelled no less than 80 meters each season. It is necessary to bear in mind that the weight of the stone is estimated to be twelve tons (see Berdnikov 1985: 137, Dubov 1990a: 102, 1995: 53, *AKYO*: 162). If winds and pack ice were moving the stone, embedded in the ice of the lake, toward the eastern shore, then there would probably be some type of counter-effects as well (cf. Berdnikov 1985: 138–139). Usually there is a prevailing south wind across the period of ice breaking apart in the spring (Smirnov 2004 [1928]: 5), while storms cannot be considered to drive in only one and the same direction. In addition, storms and strong winds are rare: the conditions of the lake are normally calm and peaceful (Smirnov 2004 [1928]: 9).

Considering the above, there is no reason to search for a miracle where it is more logical to accept that "The Stone of Borisogleb" probably remained at the bottom of the lake and that the "new appearance of the stone" is nothing more than the conflation of two distinct and sufficiently geographically distant cult stones (see also Bakaev 1996: 88). In addition, it is necessary to bear in mind that changes in the water level of the lake could potentially impact whether the actual Blue Stone could be seen, because it is quite close to the water line on the slope of a low terrace along the shoreline (see also Berdnikov 1985: 139, *AKYO*: 162). Thus, there has not been a "walking stone" (as the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo has often been referred to) since the Ice Age.

The conclusive investigation into the history of the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo, penetrating to the depth of a few centuries, demands a fundamental exploration of written sources and archival materials. Without the essential historical documentary evidence, researchers have no right – even theoretically – to equate two cult stones such as "The Stone of Borisogleb" and the real Blue Stone on Lake Pleščeevo. However, it is necessary to point out that even in the event that evidence of "The Stone of Borisogleb" being referred to as "blue" were found, this would not necessarily exclude the possibility of two "blue" stones on this strip of Lake Pleščeevo's shoreline. This possibility is supported by areal concentrations of Blue Stones (and other cult stones) in some places encountered during our fieldwork. A striking example is the concentration of three different Blue Stones known to hunters around the village of Kolobovo in the Ivanovo Oblast.

The following schema may be theoretically postulated for future considerations: Slavic Russian inhabitants had "The Stone of Borisogleb" whereas inhabitants of Merja origins preferred the Blue Stone. It is conceivable that the language of the new religion (Old Church Slavic) had already made local Slavs more accepting of Christianity than the Merja, and correspondingly more ready to adapt cult places of their vernacular belief traditions for the construction of Orthodox churches (Ahlqvist 1995: 20). This is implicitly supported by the fact that the earliest locations for Christian masses near the town Pereslavl'-Zalesskij were established closer to "The Stone of Borisogleb" than to the Blue Stone (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 102, 2006: 6–7).

A second fundamental error has also been made in discussions of the history of the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo: this cult stone is customarily approached in isolation, without consideration of the fact that this is but a single manifestation of a massive phenomenon of cult stones referred to as "Blue Stones" found across a vast expanse of Northern Eurasia (cf. also Kurbatov 2002: 560). Once the incredibly widespread overall distribution of Blue Stones is acknowledged, it becomes unrealistic to consider this phenomenon to be exclusively Merjan or to interpret any Blue Stone as an indicator of (post-)Merjan culture (cf. Matveev 1998a: 72, 1998b: 97, Mullonen 2008: 105). The distribution area of Blue Stones is unarguably much larger than the former territory of the Merjas. Using the Blue Stone as an indicator of "Merjan-ness" – i.e. exclusively Merjan culture – it would then

be necessary to postulate a correspondingly expansive Merja habitation area or to propose hyper-intensive migrations of this tribe. No such hypothesis of hyper-intensive migration can be supported owing to, among other things, the magnificent preservation of a toponymic substratum in the recognized Merjan territory, which reveals that the majority of the inhabitants remained in their own lands until their final assimilation. In spite of the unarguable connection between the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo and the Merjan inhabitants with their descendants, it is naïve to assume that this prominent boulder would have gone without special attention from the inhabitants of this area prior to the Merjan cultural phase. Moreover, K. I. Komarov (*AKYO*: 162) has asserted that the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo has been regarded as an object of pre-Christian cults from antiquity until the late Middle Ages.[9] In fact, archaeologists date the treatment of the legendary Blue Stone as a cult object from the Mesolithic period until the 17th century of the present era (*AKYO*: 162).

The Image of the Blue Stone: Functions and Conceptions

Generally speaking, in the territory of Central Russia, it is precisely as a place name that the expression "Blue Stone" appears, a toponym which has an immediate connection to external reality, a concrete referent in the form of a cult boulder or, in those cases where the stone itself was destroyed or moved elsewhere, the former location in which such a boulder was situated (see Ahlqvist 1995: 12). In the region which has been subject to investigation, all information about a Blue Stone maintained in an oral tradition was related to a concrete Blue Stone, normally situated within the sphere of activity of the particular rural village or group of villages.

Both practical functions of Blue Stones and mythic conceptions associated with them can be found in the fieldwork materials. Practical functions emerge with particular clarity in the significance of the Blue Stone as a landmark, providing long-standing markers for orientation in the landscape or as an indicator of a border. The mythic conceptions are reflected, among other things, in the sacredness of objects called "Blue Stone", and some Blue Stones exhibit magical or healing qualities.

The Blue Stone as Landmark and Boundary Stone

Many of the Blue Stones which I have researched are located in remote areas. They can often be considered old landmarks, or markers for orientation in the landscape. (Ahlqvist 1995: 12, 22–23.) Blue Stones were gathering places for hunters and at some, fisherman would gather, such as at the Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo, which marked fishing grounds. Gatherers of berries and gatherers of mushrooms also used Blue Stones as special markers at which they would enter the forest or swamp, or at which they would meet before returning home. People also rested at them during agricultural labour such as haymaking or while herding livestock.

Photo 3. The Blue Stone of the village Derevkovo along the former Provincial Road (Jaroslavl' Oblast). Photo 1995.

Being such long-time markers for travellers, many Blue Stones are situated along roads in the forest which are in most cases now overgrown, or they stand at a fork in the road or at a crossroads (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 102, 2006: 7). Blue Stones not only mark small roads of local significance, but also more important overland routes, such as the Blue Stone in Photo 3 behind the village of Derevkovo (Pereslavl' District), which stands along the former road to the town of Aleksandrov (Vladimir Oblast) (Ahlqvist 1995: 11, 15). This was one of the most ancient overland routes in this region and used to be called "The Provincial Road" (Губернская дорога), running from the city of Tver' to the city of Vladimir through a chain of pine forests. Up until recently, another Blue Stone stood on a hill in the village of Ivkino along this same road (Photo 4).

In many cases, Blue Stones are regarded as boundary markers between the lands of whole villages or even larger areas, and sometimes these correspond to administrative boundaries of the present day. The conventionally established expression "up to the Blue Stone" is implicitly indicative of a boundary function, and this expression was found used in conjunction with almost every Blue Stone toponym. The territory "up to the Blue Stone" belongs unambiguously to the in-group community while that which is "beyond the Blue Stone" is "other", belonging to another village or territory. When describing the location of a Blue Stone, local inhabitants often use the term "between" in relation to this and that village. (See further Ahlqvist 1995: 16, 22–23, 2005: 102–103, 2006: 7–8.)

Many of the practical functions of Blue Stones which are situated outside the area of investigation correspond to these observations (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 17, 2005: 104, 2006: 10–11). It may be observed that Blue Stones in the Moscow Oblast are, among other things, associated with roads

Photo 4. The "Blue Stone" of the village Ivkino, also called "Bogatyr'", moved from its position along the Provincial Road to the edge of a swamp (Jaroslavl' Oblast). Photo 2000.

(Malanin 2004b: 92),[10] while the Blue Stones of the Zaonež'e region (to the east of Lake Onega) were also found to function both as road markers and especially as boundary markers (Mullonen 2008: 99, 102–104).[11]

The Sacred Origin and Mythic Power of the Blue Stone

The Blue Stone's clear function as a boundary marker approaches a kind of sacredness, owing to the well-known indivisible connection between boundaries and concepts of sacredness (see e.g. Anttonen 1996: 88ff.). The relationship of local people to a Blue Stone is usually particularly appreciative and reverent – sometimes even devout – and the antiquity of the stone and the term for it are often explicitly mentioned. Blue Stones were considered sacred in a very immediate sense. Some Blue Stones being referred to as "divine" have also been documented.[12] Local inhabitants have an interesting explanation for the sacred origins of some Blue Stones. People assert that the Blue Stone "fell from the sky" or that "God sent it" (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 103, 2006: 8).

In some cases, the sacredness of Blue Stones was emphasized through a location near Orthodox Christian holy places (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 14, 2006: 8, 26). It is probable that the impact of the Church led to some Blue Stones (as well as some other sacred stones), which held great significance in a particular area, to be intentionally moved into a position near a church and also churches and chapels being built up against the stones themselves (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 25–26). The clear tendency of Blue Stones to be situated in locations remote from villages makes it necessary to acknowledge that the occurrence of a Blue Stone in the exceptional location of the center of a

village is the result of moving it. For example, at some point the Blue Stone in the village of Pužbol near the town of Rostov Velikij was probably moved into the village from a local field called "Blue Stones" (cf. Ahlqvist 1995: 10, 12, 20). This Blue Stone stood near the village church in front of the fence surrounding the churchyard – in the village's most central location – until its eventual disappearance at the end of the 1980s (see photo in Ahlqvist 1995: 31).

According to historical data, sacred stones were actively used as places for holding feasts (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 103, 2006: 8). "The Stone of Borisogleb" (discussed above) was a location for feasts held on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29th according to the new calendar.[13] Particularly in western parts of the Ivanovo Oblast and southern parts of the Jaroslavl' Oblast, fieldwork revealed unique information concerning summer feasts which were held at particular Blue Stones – for example, on St. John's Day (Midsummer) or at the end of the sowing season (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 103, 2006: 8–9; cf. Ahlqvist 1995: 17). I recorded a story from an old woman of the village of Soroxta (Komsomol'sk District, Ivanovo Oblast) which reveals the archaic and sacred nature of the summer feast held at the Blue Stone. The informant learned from her mother that people brought white shoes with them to the feast at the Blue Stone in the former village of Bordukovo (seven kilometers from Soroxta). These soft shoes had been treated with chalk in order to insure that they would be white and clean.[14] "A feast of the Blue Stone [*sic*]" for the whole parish was still organized in the village of Marino (Il'inskoe District, Ivanovo Oblast) "in L. I. Brežnev's time". Most likely, this Blue Stone had been taken from the woods a long time ago and placed in the middle of this village. The priests tended the stone, which had been mounted on a platform. A text on the middle of the stone read: "Christ is risen" (Христос воскресе).[15] The climax of this feast was a Crucession and the priest held services at the Blue Stone.

In some cases, the mythic character of Blue Stones and the reverence exhibited toward them reveals itself through a special fear or prudence. Accounts have been recorded, according to which certain Blue Stones have been identified as personifications of mythical beings. Similarly, strong beliefs are found about a sound which comes from beneath the stone, as well as beliefs that a being could come out of the boulder (see Ahlqvist 2005: 103, 2006: 9–10). Sometimes the mythic being guards a treasure, and legends about such treasures are connected to some of the Blue Stones (see Ahlqvist 1995: 15, 2005: 103, 2006: 9). A legend about a maiden weeping on the stone because of the heavy burden of a treasure is connected to the Blue Stone of the village of Derevkovo, mentioned above (see Ahlqvist 1995: 15). Perhaps the most intriguing documented legend of a treasure connected to a Blue Stone is the account of "golden idols" hidden under the Blue Stone of Trjaslovo, also mentioned above. Considering the abundance of legends about treasures, it is no surprise that treasure hunters often disturb the slumber of sacred stones: more than one Blue Stone has been overturned in order to uncover its hidden treasure.

In spite of the fact that across recent decades, the rising generations have forgotten many of these traditions and how the sacred stones should

be respected and revered (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 16, 1996: 250, 2006: 26–27), the Blue Stones of the investigated area have to some degree retained echoes of their former sacredness up to the present day. Published materials treating other areas reveal some analogies to mythic conceptions of Blue Stones (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 17). One such echo can be seen in the Moscow Oblast (see Malanin 2004b: 90), as well as in one of the local Blue Stones of the Zaonež'e region (Mullonen 2008: 104). The sacred nature of objects with the name "Blue Stone" can also be traced in data from other northern regions like, for example, the Verxovaž'e region of the Vologda Oblast (see Mullonen 2008: 103–104).

Magical and Healing Qualities of the Blue Stone

Some information on the magical character and healing qualities of the Blue Stones of Central Russia appears in historical studies and local histories (see Rogaleva 1992: 17, Malanin 2004b: 90). This has been further supported by my own fieldwork research (see Ahlqvist 2006: 8, 10), as when informants pointed out that old people went to the Blue Stone of Trjaslovo (mentioned above) to pray if someone became ill. The Blue Stone of Ivkino (also mentioned above) retained magical associations and was widely famed, while the village of Ivkino itself was also famous for having "ninety-nine sorcerers". The large boulder was called *Bogatyr'* ['hero; giant'] in this village (see also Ahlqvist 2005: 112, 2006: 26), while a variant of this stone's name – "Blue Stone" – was documented in the neighbouring locality of Kižila of the Vladimir Oblast.

It is quite rare for magic and a Blue Stone to be directly and unequivocally connected. For example, it was said of the Blue Stone of the village of Romanovo (Pereslavl' District) that "near this stone, you will become lost for sure," in spite of the fact that this stone stands on the former road to the village of Jeršovo. It was explained that "there was witchery"; "devils howl".[16] However, sacrifices to Blue Stones are implicitly indicative of their magical qualities. M. I. Smirnov (1919: 7) mentioned sacrifices to the mystical Blue Stone or Stone Woman of Berendeevo Swamp (Pereslavl' District) as a historical fact (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 14, Bakaev 1996: 90–91, and below). Extremely rare traces of sacrifices to an object of this category are found up to the relatively recent past in the village of Nikola-Boj (Borisoglebskij District, Jaroslavl' Oblast), where it was customary to leave bread or other food on the local Blue Stone. People also took rain water from this stone "to drink" – an action which once again emphasizes the magical qualities of the stone.[17] In the village of Stepaševo (Ivanovo Oblast), it was customary to leave "grain for the birds" at the end of the harvest season on the Blue Stone situated in a field of the same name. During agricultural labour, local people rested at this Blue Stone and they would set out any of the leftovers from what they ate there "for the birds". It was said that old people in the community considered this stone is holy. Traditions of worshiping a few types of cult stones have combined in this case, noting that for the time being this is the only clear example of a Blue Stone which is also a

cup-marked stone in Merja territories (see Ahlqvist 2006: 10, 2012: 18).[18] In addition, the Stepaševo Blue Stone also belongs to the "cross stones" (камень-крестовик): a simple rough-carved cross appears on the flat side of the stone near the scooped cup, revealing an adaptation of the cult object by Christians. I recently also recorded unique information about a "Blue Stone" in the village of Bordovoe (Ivanovo Oblast). This healing stone was situated in a field, and early in the morning people could see a woman in white by it. This spirit was believed to protect everything that was under cultivation. Drinking sprees were organized by this stone to get a good harvest. (See also Ahlqvist 2012: 23.)

In the Merja territories of the chronicles – especially near Rostov Velikij – Church rituals with sacrifices were conducted at cup-marked stones in particular, providing direct evidence of agrarian magic (see further Ahlqvist 1996, 2005: 107–110, 2006: 15–20, 2012: 16). A boulder of this group of cult stones is usually called a "Village Community Stone" (Мирский камень) and situated precisely in the middle of the village (rather than at a border).[19] Cup-like indentations in these stones have been consciously and carefully made by human hands.[20]

In other territories (including Northern Russia), data shows up on magical and healing properties of the Blue Stone without a specific connection to any concrete cult boulder. However, in the Arxangel'sk Oblast, healing properties were attributed to a particular Blue or Grey Stone (Ševelev 1996: 66). In the historical Balto-Finnic language territory, among others, at the periphery of the distribution area of the toponymic model and of the cultural-historical phenomenon of the Blue Stone, *Sini*(*nen*) *kivi* ['Blue Stone'] is not only found as the name of a concrete geographical object, but also emerges in folk poetry (most prominently in incantations) as the name of a mythic geographical object (see also Frog 2008: 148, 2009: 12, 17). As a mythic geographical object, the Blue Stone generally has no less of a distribution than as the name of a concrete geographical object. The broad areal distribution of this mythic image is attested by the Blue Stone's appearance in Belarusian incantations and Galician-Russian calendar ritual songs (see Ageeva 1982: 157–158).

The epithet "Blue-Burning-Stone" (Синь-горюч-камень) is widely known (see e.g. *SRNG* 37: 331), as is the crystallized formula "on the blue sea, a blue stone" (на синем море синий камень) (see e.g. Mullonen 2008: 104). The *bylina* epic song about Sadko says:

А й пошел Садке ко Ильмень да ко озеру
А й как он садился на синь-горюч камень да об озеро
Ой, как начал играть во гусли во яровчаты.

A, i, Sadko went to Lake Il'men'
A, i, and he sat down on the blue-burning stone at the lake
And began playing the *gusli*.

The playing of Sadko had magical power: the Tsar of the Water emerged from the lake and gave him an unbelievably huge catch of fish. (See Rybakov 1988: 262, 275.) There is a corresponding connection between the Blue Stone, the Lord of Water and the underwater realm in an Estonian tale (Aleksandrov 2000: 122). Sometimes Blue Stones are considered a locus-emblem of the water spirit (see Mullonen 2008: 104).

Water spirits were as significant for fishermen as forest spirits were for hunters (see Siikala 1990: 156). Most likely, hunting or fishing luck was requested specifically at the Blue Stone. Many of the Blue Stones from Central Russia have no connection to water. In most cases, it is therefore possible to deduce a more probable historical mystical connection of the Blue Stone with forest spirits than with water spirits, and there is the implication that, as a rule, the best information about Blue Stones from the investigated area was preserved by hunters.

Additional essential information about the magical power of the Blue Stone and its use in healing rituals and incantation formulas is found in Northern Russia and in the Finno-Karelian tradition (see Frog 2008, 2009). In Finno-Karelian healing magic, pains are not only sent into the holes of cup-marked stones but also inside the Blue Stone itself: the kalevalaic epic hero Väinämöinen asks the maiden of the otherworld to gather pains "into the maw of the Blue Stone".[21] Overall, the Blue Stone is connected to the myths of the creation of the world, being one of the manifestations of the first stone at the bottom of the primal sea. Not only Karelian and Finnish incantations are connected with this myth, but also Russian and Lithuanian incantations as well.[22] The image of the Blue Stone provides a foundation for the world tree or *axis mundi*, a location which is the source of endless magical power and one of the most common mythic locations to which illnesses are banished (Frog 2008: 141, 147ff.).[23] Frog (2008, 2009) also connects the image of the Blue Stone – as a cultural model in mythological thinking – with an entrance to the otherworld.

The Blue Stone of Finno-Karelian incantations is the location of the Devil, of which a personification is the serpent.[24] In kalevalaic cosmogony, Väinämöinen or a "black man" is said to have split the Blue Stone and killed the black snake which drinks beer inside of it, and a giant oak – an image of the world tree – grows from the flood of black blood.[25] According to A. A. Alexandrov (2000: 120–121), the belief that the life of a snake is concealed within a stone has parallels in Lithuanian traditions, where there were so-called "snake stones", and where grass snakes were revered, being identified as *veles* (as the souls of dead ancestors; on *Veles*, see further below), which had assumed that form.

Rather widespread legends found in Central Russia describe the Blue Stone falling from the sky, which invites the consideration of a possible connection of the Blue Stone to the ancient supreme god, god of thunder – with an image reminiscent of the Finno-Karelian *Ukko* (see Ahlqvist 1995: 18, 20–21, Frog 2009: 17–18). The thunder god appears in a blue costume and has a folk name *Siniviitta* ['Blue-Coat'] (see Ahlqvist 1995: 18). The attributes of *Ukko* are (among others) a hammer and sword (see Siikala 1990: 151–152, 1992: 173), which are also attributes of a *bogatyr'* or an

archangel in Slavic myths (see note 25). In one incantation, the god *Ukko* is mentioned in direct connection with the Blue Stone (see *SKVR* XIII$_3$ 9040, Frog 2008: 158).

It is probably not a coincidence that the Day of St. Elijah was celebrated at the Blue Stone in the village of Trjaslovo (addressed above), through which it is placed in direct relation to the Slavic cult of the thunder god – the Prophet Elijah – who is opposed by a serpent, the Devil or *Veles* (see Ivanov & Toporov 1974: 86). The name of the *bylina* hero Ilja-*bogatyr'* ['Elijah-Hero'] may be connected to the variant name of the Ivkino Blue Stone: *Bogatyr'*. The fact that in Northwest Russia, in Karelia and Ingria, ritual songs honouring St. Elijah were still being performed in the beginning of the 20th century cannot go unmentioned, as these reflect traditions of the ancient vernacular religion through which an earlier runo-song about *Ukko* is discernable (Siikala 1990: 156). Considering the opposition of the snake and the thunder god in the image of the Blue Stone, it is possible to suggest that in some sense the Blue Stone generally connects two worlds – the lower and the upper. One of the most important functions of the folklore image of the stone is, by and large, regarded precisely as marking the borders between two worlds – the world of the living and the world of the dead (Demidenko 1987: 86, 95, 98).[26]

The Name "Blue Stone" in Contrast to "White Stone"

In the majority of cases, Blue Stones are quite dark, although the stones themselves are of all different substances with their particular colours. Local people not only describe the colour of their own Blue Stones as "blue", but also as "grey", "dark", "bluish black" and "near black". Many of them appear dark blue or bluish black in certain light – especially in humid weather or under the morning dew – as, for example, the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo. Concerning this primarily dark monolith, V. Berdnikov (1985: 137) states: "The blue colour appears as the result of the refraction and reflection of light on the surface of grains and flakes of biotite-quartz (which are black)."

Where does the name "Blue Stone" derive from? In Old East Slavic, the adjective *sinij* still remained an undifferentiated signifier for the dark end of the colour spectrum: in addition to the actual colour "blue", it could also refer to "grey", "dark" and "black". Accordingly, M. V. Šorin (1988) proposes that "Blue" in the name of the stone could signify its colour as "grey" or "dark" (see also *SRNG* 37: 331). This hypothesis is supported by the semantic field of Old Indic *çyāmás* ['black, dark'], cognate with the Slavic root of *sinij* (Old East Slavic and Old Church Slavonic синь) (see *ESRY* III: 624). In Northern Russia, the adjective *sinij* is also used with the dialectal meaning "black, dirty" (see further Tolstoj 1995: 398–401, *SRNG* 37: 331). In the vicinity of the town of Galič (Kostroma Oblast), the adverb *sinë* (синё) means "[it is] dark" (*SRNG* 37: 322), and in the Moscow Oblast, a *sinjuška* (синюшка) is a "black ceramic milk pitcher (черная кринка)" (*SRNG* 37: 340). The adjective *sineobraznyj* (синеобразный) from the Olonec region

means "having dark blood (used of forest spirits, water spirits and other impure powers)" and is especially interesting owing to its associations with superstitious conceptions (*SRNG* 37: 326).

M. V. Šorin (1988) addresses the symbolic meaning of the epithet according to a white–black (light–dark) opposition, in which the black colour is a signifier for misfortune, death and the chthonic otherworld. It is interesting that among some Northern ethnic groups, "blue" is the colour of the otherworld, associated not only with concepts of otherworldliness and death, but also with remoteness (see Mullonen 2008: 104; cf. Frog 2008: 148), which directly corresponds to the location of cult boulders and places called "Blue Stone" in Central Russia – at relatively remote distances from villages, on their borders.

According to Šorin (1988), the epithet "blue" in the name of the stone is a signifier of death, of the otherworld, and corresponds to the sphere of activity of the Slavic god *Veles* / *Volos*. In Old East Slavic, *Sinéts* (сине́ц) ['demon, devil'] (< синий) also appears as a taboo term for the Devil.[27] The cult of *Veles* is assumed to have been extremely significant, especially in the northern regions of the medieval Rus, and with ancient roots in the town of Rostov (Rybakov 1988: 419–420). In the region of the Jaroslavl' Oblast, the cult of (Blue) stones may have been to some degree superseded by the cult of *Veles*, or the cult of *Veles* may have partially assimilated its functions, which naturally could only happen after the arrival of the Slavs (Ahlqvist 1995: 19–20, 25; cf. Komarov 2003: 417). Nonetheless, it remains difficult to consider the ancient Blue Stones as manifestations of the cult of the dead, as they have sometimes been interpreted, when the number of Blue Stones with their locations remote from habitations and their well-attested main functions are all taken into account.[28] The existence of a large necropolis near the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo (discussed above) is not sufficient to demonstrate an original ancient connection of Blue Stones with the cult of the dead (cf. Dubov 1990a: 104, 106, 1995: 55): the earliest burials of this burial mound date only to the end of the 11th or beginning of the 12th century (see *AKYO* 164–165).[29] However, some Blue Stones eventually assumed agrarian magical functions, which were themselves connected to the cult of the dead. However surprising, the cult of the Blue Stone remained vital much longer than the cult of *Veles*. In my opinion, this can only be explained by the deeper and more stable roots of the cult of the Blue Stone.

According to A. K. Matveev (1998b: 97), "Blue Stone" may be considered an old loan translation. I propose that there may have been linguistic contamination leading to the conflation of the Russian adjective *sinij* with an original Finno-Permic adjective stem which meant "black", with reflexes in, for example, Mari *šimə, šim, śimə* [specifically 'black'], Komi *sim* ['rust; dark'], Udmurt *sin-*, *sinomi* ['to rust'] (see Ahlqvist 2005: 105, 2006: 12, also Frog 2008: 141, 147–148). In the toponymy of former Finno-Ugric territories, the root *Sim*(V)- functions as one of the adjectival stems meaning "black". Sometimes this stem appears in the form *Sin*(V)-, which is explainable according to the documented change of the nasals /m/ and /n/ (original /n/ most often changes to /m/ but the reverse also occasionally occurs).

Alongside the Slavic stem meaning "blue", there is a corresponding Finno-Volgic stem **sine-* ['blue'] (with reflexes in, for example, Finnish *sini*(*nen*), Vepsian *sińińe*, Mordvin (Erzja) *seń, säń*, (Mokša) *seń, śeńəm*), which is considered a potential Indo-Iranian loan (*SSA* III: 183). Accordingly, this contamination could originally have already occurred with the Finno-Volgic stem in the pre-Slavic period. Subsequently, the (Old) Russian adjective *sin'*, *sinij* must also have had later impact within the former Finno-Ugric habitation area of present-day Russia: the development of the originally proposed Finno-Ugric modifier would become understood by the Slavic population as a purely Russian lexical element (**Sim*(V)- ['Black'] > *Sin*(V)- > *Sinij*). In all probability, the toponymic model of *Sinij kamen'* ['Blue Stone'] spread later, when it had already become associated with the colour blue.

The name "Blue Stone" adapted into Russian must be a loan translation of the original Finno-Ugric form. The existence of the analogical toponymic model in the western peripheries of the Finno-Ugric language continuum – *Sini*(*nen*) *kivi* ['Blue Stone'] etc. in Finland and Estonia – outside of the territory of the active impact of Slavic languages also speaks for this. In these areas, a toponymic model as a translation loan in the reverse direction from Russian *Sinij kamen'* ['Blue Stone'] is not even a theoretical possibility because here we are also concerned first and foremost with geographical names which have concrete referents. This sort of isogloss of a toponymic model clearly speaks for a prototype which was not originally Slavic.[30] In addition, an abundance of extra-linguistic factors, which are similar across the entire broad geographical distribution area of this phenomenon, are correspondingly indicative of common ancient roots of this toponymic model.

This reassessment of the "Black Stone" > "Blue Stone" hypothesis is supported by extra-linguistic factors as well. This first requires addressing "White Stones" (Белый камень), of which approximately twenty have been found in the investigated area. These should be approached as standing in opposition to "Black Stones" rather than to "Blue Stones". In spite of the fact that the toponymic model for "White Stone" has quantitatively been left in the shadow of the "Blue Stone" toponymic model, both models generally exhibit corresponding distribution across those regions where the frequency of Blue Stones is high.

In addition to examples from Central Russia, "White Stone" also has a concrete referent, among other places, in the Leningrad Oblast (see e.g. Kurbatov 2002: 559) and in the Svir' River basin, where White Stone (Белый камень) is the name of a rocky islet (*SGBS*: 1). At least nine analogical toponyms appear in Finland in the form of *Valkeakivi* ['White Stone'] (see MLKP). The cult significance of White Stones appears less prominently than that of Blue Stones. However, in many respects the image of the White Stone exhibits the same functions as the Blue Stone – both practical and mythological (see Ahlqvist 2005: 107, 2006: 14). Like Blue Stones, White Stones are usually situated on the edge of a village's territory or on the edge of a larger district area. Also like a Blue Stone, a White Stone seems to have been "a landmark for old people," as I was informed in the vicinity of the well-known village of Mstëra (Vladimir Oblast). White Stones often mark

old roads, especially their crossroads and even a low water crossing such as one named "White Stone" in the Ivanovo Volga region. Mythological echoes are also preserved: the White Stone behind the village of Nagaja Sloboda (Rostov District) "fell down from above, from the sky"; according to local belief, a forest spirit wanders at night in the field called "White Stone" near the village of Gusarnikovo (Rostov District).[31] There is analogical information from other regions. The historical White Stone of the lands of Novgorod, mentioned in a manuscript from 1483 (Morjakov 2000: 111), was clearly a boundary marker. At least one of the "White Stones" (*Valkeakivi*) in Finland is also mentioned as a boundary stone (see MLKP), as well as references corresponding to uses of the phrase "up to the Blue Stone", for example, concerning one *Valkonen kivi* in Finland, local people used to say: "Cattle were walked out to pasture as far as the White Stone" (NA). Concrete mythological qualities of the White Stone are also reflected in some objects called *Valkeakivi* in Finland (see Ahlqvist 1995: 23, 2006: 14).[32]

During fieldwork, stones with names from other colours such as "Red Stones" (Красный камень), were encountered far less often. However, an analogical model, e.g. *Punakivi* ['Red-Stone'], also appears in Finnish toponymy (see MLKP). There is additional information about some "Grey Stones" (Серый камень), which are in fact variants of the name "Blue Stone". In the territory of Finland, a few stones called *Harmaakivi* ['Grey-Stone'] are also found (see also Frog 2008: 148).

In Central Russia, "Black Stone" (Чёрный камень) has hardly been found as a toponym. I have only recorded very general information: "The Black Stone was somewhere around Pereslavl'," which could potentially refer to that most famous Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo. The Kama River basin with its tributary, the Čusovaja River, is adjacent to the present distribution area of the Finno-Permic stem **sim3*, discussed above. In addition to three "Blue Stones" (Синий камень) and one "Bluish" (Синенький) stone found in this area, "Black [Stones]" (Чёрный [камень]) and stones called "Dark" (Темный) and "Darkish" (Темняш) (Galuško 1962: 45) may speak for the local Slavic population's accurate interpretation of the meaning of the underlying lexical element, and a direct loan translation of the names of stones. In Finland, on the opposite frontier of the distribution area of the Blue Stone phenomenon, there are dozens of toponyms such as *Mustakivi* ['Black Stone'], many of which marked fishing grounds (see NA, MLKP), like Blue Stones of Central Russia (see also Ahlqvist 1995: 17).[33] Consequently, it seems possible that the original semantic content of the toponymic model was preserved on the peripheries of the phenomenon's distribution area in particular.[34]

Variation between "black stone" and "blue stone" appears, among others places, in a protective incantation for cattle which was documented in the Soligalič District (Kostroma Province): "[...] as a blue stone in a Blue Sea, as a black stone in a Black Sea [....]" ("[...] аки синей камень в Синем море, аки черный камень в Черном море [....]") (see Ageeva 1982: 133). Cases are sometimes encountered in Finland where adjectival modifiers *sini*(*nen*) ['blue'] and *musta* ['black'] appear in the names of adjacent places, as in the case of the closely situated *Sinikivi* ['Blue-Stone'] and *Mustasaari* ['Black-

Island'] (see MLKP). Fieldwork also revealed cases of an area of land or water having a name related to the Russian adjective "black" (чёрный) adjacent to a "Blue Stone" object or location. For example, one "Blue Stone" is located near the former village of "Black Hill" (Чёрная гора) (Vladimir Oblast). Something of a semi-translation loan can correspondingly be seen in the names "Black Earths" (Чёрные земли) and "Black River" (Чёрная речка) near the "Blue Stone" close to the village of Vasil'kovo (Rostov District).[35]

Quite a number of cases of a toponymic opposition of the names of two types of stones – Blue and White Stones – are documented. For example, there is a Blue Stone not far from the Mstëra White Stone (mentioned above). These two types of stones are connected in the surroundings of the settlements of Pervušino and Kubrinsk (Pereslavl' District), where two Blue Stones are known, one of which is only realized as a place-name, along with a White Stone in the swamp called Simeža or Simeži (< Сим(V)- ['Black']). An analogical case is reported in the Ivanovo Oblast (see Rogaleva 1993: 223). It is also possible to find examples of the opposition of "Black-Stone" (*Mustakivi*) and "White Stone" (*Valkoinen kivi*) in Finland (see e.g. MLKP).

Following from the above, it becomes possible to arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the original semantic content of the colour indicator in terms for the geographic and mythic Blue Stones is "black", and therefore these names originally referred not to "blue" but to "black" stones. The magical power of the "black stone" and its healing properties were understood and emphasized around the world. An exceptional example is the Muslim cult of the "Black Stone" (*al-Hajar al-Aswad*) of the Kaaba of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, toward which all Muslims turn to pray, and Frog (2008: 148) draws attention to a Tibetan tradition of breaking black stones to free or expel spirits.

In a certain respect, the relationship of mythic stones to colour symbolism occurs on a very widespread basis, and the most ancient roots of reverence for the Black Stone could therefore originate from a universal human mode of thinking. Early on, V. J. Mansikka (1911) pointed out that the Blue Stone and also the White Stone hold an important place in East European cosmogonies, tracing their origins back to Biblical motifs (cf. also Siikala 1992: 165–166). According to Frog (2008: 142), the multi-dimensional system of Blue Stone images incorporates a number of strata of cultural influences. This question requires fundamental comparative research. Nevertheless, it is clear that in the investigated area – and in the rest of Northern Eurasia – the foundation of this model is indigenous.

The Cult of the Stone in Central Russia: The Blue Stone in Cultural-Historical Perspective

The Ice Age moved a lot of stone boulders into the central regions of Russia. However, compared to the northern territories (e.g. Finland or Karelia), large stones in Central Russia are quite a rare phenomenon (cf. also Kurbatov

2002: 559–560). This fundamental geographical characteristic should be taken into account when pursuing cultural-historical research on cult stones in these regions. Many opinions have been expressed concerning the origins, the era of inception and the ethnic belongingness of "the cult of the stone" in northern parts of Eurasia. The sufficiently large boulders of Central Russia could not have escaped the attention of the first inhabitants of these regions, and considering the innate human inclination to worship or deify certain phenomena in nature – stones, among others – it is reasonable to stipulate that such boulders were already shown reverence in ancient times, dawning in the darkest depths of the Stone Age. Across the millennia following the Ice Age, peoples of the northern strip of Eurasia were developing their own traditions of "the cult of the stone" – and above all, the archaic category addressed here as the Blue Stone.

The history of habitation of central parts of Russia compels researchers to seek the roots of local cult stone worship among ancient Finno-Ugrian ethnic groups of this region, yet prehistoric tribes of Baltic origin with their particular cultural proximity to Finno-Ugrians of Central Russia cannot go without consideration. Having plumbed the depths of the ethnogenesis and pre-history of Finno-Ugrians and their neighbours, Christian Carpelan (see e.g. 2000) proposes that the archaic Uralic linguistic-cultural stage emerged as early as the end of the Ice Age in Eastern Europe with a center in the Volga-Oka region, where it was a result of the initial colonisation of that area. Correspondingly, the many-layered toponymy of the diverse linguistic substrata definitely attests to an aboriginal Finno-Ugrian inhabitation of the central parts of Russia arising from the depths of the centuries.

The substratal place names of adjacent and proximate geographical objects or locations – lands, rivers, creeks, etc. – close to cult stones also speaks for strong connections of the cult of the stone to the former Finno-Ugrian inhabitants of the region. In addition to the toponyms of Finno-Ugrian origin which occur immediately adjacent to Blue Stones of the investigated area that have already been mentioned above, such as *Kižila*, *Pužbol*, *Mstëra*, *Soroxta* and *Simeža*, there are also hydronyms such as, *Šižegda* (a river which begins at a Blue Stone), *Peza*, *Šula*, *Kubrja*, *Igolba*, *Njun'ga*, *Nergel'*, *Juxor* and *Kivexro*, oikonyms such as *Pany*, *Toščebylovo*, *Tepra* and *Samet'*, microtoponyms such as *Ladugino*, *Pintemoča*, etc. – all in all, an enormous number of substratal toponyms. In the investigated area, the original substratal names of cult stones themselves were rarely preserved. One possible explanation for this may be an active participation of the Slavic-Russian population in the maintenance of sacred stones in this territory: the names of stones could then have been translated into Russian as seems to be the case concerning the name "Cock Stone" (Петухов камень) near the town of Uglič in the Jaroslavl' Oblast (see Ahlqvist 2005: 111, 2006: 21–22). Such substratal names of sacred stones are nonetheless known, as in the cases of the historical *Mardas* and *Kuvaldin* Stones in the Jaroslavl' Volga region (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 25, 1996: 247, 252–253). Indeed, the name "Blue Stone" itself, with the etymology outlined above and its area of distribution, indicates that the roots of worship of such stones must penetrate into the depths of antiquity.

The Finno-Ugrian roots of the cult of the stone in Central and Northern Russia are also emphasized by the great significance of worshipping stones in the traditions of present-day Finno-Ugrians and populations known to be historical settlers of the northern strip of Eurasia (see also Dubov 1990a: 103, 1995: 53). Generally speaking, the phenomenon of worshipping cult stones appears precisely in those parts of Finno-Ugrian territories where the stones exist as a reality in nature. In those territories with fewer large naturally occurring boulders, other natural objects and locations were traditionally deified, as for example groves and trees in Mari and Mordvin territories (not forgetting the widespread deification of springs). Conversely, there is a lot of data on the worship of stones among Finns, Estonians, and other Balto-Finnic peoples. Cup-marked stones are widely found among other types of sacred stones in Finland, Estonia and Karelia, with evidence of relatively recent sacrifice at those locations. Historical sources attest to the worship of stones in the lands of Finno-Ugrian tribes of the Čuds, Ižorians and Korelas. In 1534, "filthy pagan sanctuaries" of these lands were destroyed, the sacrificial stones sunk into the water, by the order of the Makarij, Archbishop of Novgorod.[36] However, worshiping sacred stones continued among Ižorians and Votes up to the 20th century (Semenov 1986: 121).

The worship of sacred stones is also found among the Khanty, Mansi and among Uralic peoples more generally, such as among the Samoyedic peoples. It is worth mentioning in particular the (predominantly) stone *seidi*s ['god; idol; sanctified object or natural feature'] of the Sámi. These were situated in the immediate proximity of fishing grounds and (reindeer) hunting grounds, and they were also landmarks of those places as well as markers assuring rights for the use of those places. At *seidi*s, sacrifices were made to the spirit of a place for luck in the means of livelihood. Across recent centuries, ancient *seidi*s of hunters and fishermen increasingly became communal sacred places, at which sacrificial rituals were conducted for diverse purposes – healing rituals, among others. Some of the kin-group or family *seidi*s became widely known and outsiders began coming to sacrifice there.[37] Generally speaking, the worship of Sámi gods has much in common with the phenomenon of Blue Stones of Central Russia, with their main features and most significant functions. The archaic features underlying the essence of Blue Stones enable the conclusion that the original roots of this cultural-historical phenomenon are in the religious concepts of earlier hunters, gatherers and fishermen from across the northern strip of Eurasia (see also Sarmela 1994: 45). There is no doubt that the worship of Blue Stones (together with other, parallel categories of cult stones, such as White Stones) is the most visible category of this most archaic stratum of stone worship, rooted in the worldview of Finno-Ugric peoples.

The question of the origin of "Stone Women" (Каменные бабы) is also of interest in this context. Stone Women are well known over a large territory which includes Southern Russia and Asia and thus they are addressed as a phenomenon of the steppe (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 21–22 and works there cited). However, South Turkic tribes were not alone in considering stones which resemble a human being to be especially sacred. This is

also found among northern peoples, including the Sámi (see e.g. Itkonen 1984 [1948] II: 310). When considering the origin of the Stone Woman of Berendeevo Swamp (see above) and others (see e.g. Titov 1885: 201, 438, Rogaleva 1993: 223), special attention should be given to the Sámi *seidi*, often referred to as "old woman" (see e.g. Vize 1912: 457), or explained as a sorcerer who was turned to stone (see e.g. Vize 1912: 458–459, Itkonen 1984 [1948] II: 318, 534). In the conversion process, Christian missionaries put their all into destroying *seidi*s which had a humanoid form because they considered these to be genuine idols (Vize 1912: 400). Correspondingly, the diverse and contradictory accounts in legends of the Stone Woman of Berendeevo Swamp may imply that it could have actually been destroyed much earlier than has been proposed.

Indirectly, the connection of some of the sacred stones with cults of waterfowl, the bear or horse may speak for Finno-Ugrian roots of worshiping these objects in the investigated area as these are thought to be related to Merja peoples or earlier Finno-Ugrian ethnic groups.[38] Correspondingly, E. I. Gorjunova (1961: 142) argues that the remains of a cult of waterfowl are reflected in folk beliefs of the Kostroma region concerning treasures guarded by a goose or duck. According to Gorjunova (1961: 142), the sign of a goose flipper appears on the stone which covers these treasures concealed in the earth, and such a stone with a carved goose's flipper appeared in the Kostroma Oblast. A feast was held especially on the Day of St. Elijah at "The Bear Stone" (Медведь-камень), near the town of Plës on the Volga river (Rogaleva & Jablokov 1992). S. B. Rogaleva and A. V. Jablokov (1992: 40) point out the clear pre-Christian foundations for worshiping the Bear Stone, the name of which originates from a belief that a huge bear sat on the stone or that an old man sat on the stone and turned into a bear, according the local people. It does not seem unreasonable to connect this image to some sort of echoes of shamanism. (See also Komarov 2003: 415ff.)

The cultural-historical phenomenon and toponymic model of "Blue Stone" could not appear spontaneously across the whole broad distribution area. Considering the clear concentration of the phenomenon in the central territories of Russia, it seems reasonable to propose that the image of the Blue Stone originates precisely from this region. This is further emphasized by the fact that here the toponymic model always has a concrete relationship to a certain real geographical object or location. Hypothetically, it is possible to consider that the first prototype of the Blue Stone could be found precisely here – and it is only fair to confer this honour on the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo.

The special position of the Volga-Oka region as the center of the Finno-Ugrians has been emphasized. Carpelan considers this region to have an uninterrupted history as a cradle of cultural innovations and a region which – at least from time to time – experienced overpopulation (see e.g. Carpelan 2000, 2006: 85, 87). According to Carpelan, time and again throughout pre-history, even during the Stone and Bronze Ages, this region emerged as the primary source for several postulated demic movement waves in north and north-westerly directions, their influences reaching as far as Finland and eastern Karelia. Carpelan suggests that both cultural and linguistic elements

were transmitted with those waves of influence. The cultural-historical phenomenon of the Blue Stone might be counted among these cultural impacts. Precisely some of these waves of migration could be attributable with the spread of this powerful image from central Russia to the north and northwest. The existence of the toponymic model on the peripheries (from the point of view of Central Russia) not only in forms with the adjectival modifier meaning "blue", but also with the original semantic value of "black", indicates that the cult of the Blue Stone did not take root in any single period, but rather was brought in different times with multiple waves of migration – bearing the original name of Finno-Ugric origin. I consider it obvious that the cultural-historical phenomenon itself already underwent its main distribution in the period of ancient hunting and fishing cultures of the Stone Age.

On the basis of the above proposal – regarding rethinking the "Black Stone" > "Blue Stone" hypothesis – Frog (2008: 148, 2009: 11–12) considers it possible that the history of the Blue Stone as a point of access to the mythic supernatural world could have arisen from a very ancient and widespread tradition going back to the depth of a few millennia. The suggested dating is quite acceptable, and it should be possible to verify with the help of archaeology.[39] The premise of the preservation of the incredibly powerful cult of the Blue Stone up to the present day is, of course, its transmission from one culture to the next. It can be proposed that the preservation of archaic traditions and rituals, which were related primarily to hunting, gathering and fishing cultures, was to some extent made possible because of the fact that these original means of livelihood continued to play a significant role in subsequent early agricultural societies, such as the societies of the D'jakovo and Merja. Thereafter, the image of the Blue Stone was adapted considerably by the Slavic-Russian population which migrated into the region. I would postulate that the Russified name for the Blue Stone began coming into active use for this ancient cultural-historical phenomenon of the northern strip of Eurasia while these or other territories were first being colonized by Slavs as part of the process of the translation of the original name. Therefore, in this period, the "Blue Stone" began to spread not only as a cultural-historical phenomenon, but also as a toponymic model, which actually – at least in Central Russia – should have been known in every village. Thus the spread of the Blue Stone toponymic model can certainly not be regarded as evidence for a specifically Merjan migration.

The long history of the cult of the stone also emerges in the entanglement of different rituals of worship associated with diverse types of cult stones. Part of the complex of mythic concepts associated with the Blue Stone had most likely already emerged in Central Russia in ancient times, and later parts of the complex could already significantly intermingle with images of some other types of cult stones in the northern and western territories of the area of distribution of this broad cultural-historical phenomenon (see also Frog 2008: 155).[40] This is quite understandable considering that the farther the Blue Stone progressed from Central Russia, the more it emerges not as necessarily connected to a concrete geographic object or location but rather manifests as a purely imaginary mythic image. Further conclusions,

however, will require the analysis of historical folklore sources – particularly incantations collected in central parts of Russia.

Conclusions

The cultural heritage of Central Russia – both linguistic and most of all toponymic, as well as the intangible heritage on the whole – arises in many respects not only from the local Finno-Ugrian peoples known from chronicles, but also from the more ancient substrata of the region's history of habitation. The worship of stones in this region naturally arises from a long cultural tradition with roots of Finno-Ugrian origin. The roots of the cultural-historical phenomenon of the Blue Stone are sunk in the most ancient cultural strata of the northern strip of Eurasia. The mythic image of the Blue Stone should be considered a pre-Merjan, Finno-Ugrian phenomenon which was indeed remarkably actively maintained among the Merjans as well (Ahlqvist 2000: 85, 90), and subsequently by the Russian population of the same territories in their turn. It is impossible to agree with the opinion that the worship of the stones in the Upper Volga region only appeared in the 9th–11th centuries with Slavic-Russian immigrants from the northwest, the lands of Novgorod (Dubov 1990a: 106, 1990b: 173, 1995: 55). The only exception to this might be the cup-marked stones of the territories of the Merja peoples according to chronicles (Ahlqvist 1995: 24–25, 1996: 253). Conversely, everything speaks on behalf of the transmission of worshiping the most archaic types of cult stones across generations, traditions which no doubt had already existed here since the most remote periods of the region's habitation (see Ahlqvist 1995: 20; cf. also Komarov 2003: 415–416).

In contrast to Blue and White Stones, usually located quite remote from villages, Village Community Stones, including cup-marked stones of territories of the Merja according to chronicles, are situated in the center of the village. The fact that cup-marked stones no longer appear connected to hunting and fishing cultures but rather to agricultural ways of life seems obvious. Agricultural and healing magic were primarily related to cup-marked stones, although healing magic in particular also has features in common with a number of Blue Stones – especially Blue Stones which could be doubly classified as also so-called print stones or cup-marked stones. A preliminary dating of cup-marked stones in the territories attributed to the Merja in chronicles could associate them specifically with the Merjan cultural phase, but this problem still requires the exploration of many open questions (see Ahlqvist 1996: 253).

All of the later history of the cult of the stone in central areas of Russia clearly points to the adaptation of cultural elements associated with native inhabitants by Slavic-Russian populations. These ancient cultural elements gradually became part of the culture of those populations and were – miraculously – preserved among them, and then these were again to some degree further acculturated through the participation of the Orthodox religion. It is appropriate to consider that the worship of the stones became

an inseparable element of the Old Russian pre-Christian intangible cultural heritage only when they moved into territories of the northern strip of Eurasia for habitation (cf. Dubov 1995: 53).

It is necessary to emphasize that possible new data concerning the distribution of certain types of cult stones, and especially data from archaeological investigations of the immediate proximity of a number of cult stones, could to some degree correct this picture and dating. Complex archaeological research of a sufficient number of Blue Stones, White Stones, cup-marked stones, etc., which are still standing in their original positions, must be conducted, taking into account sources on toponymy, folklore, ethnography and archival materials. Another matter of interest is research on differences between the periods of cultic use of individual Blue Stones in territories of the central and northern parts of Eurasia, as well as differences between Blue Stones and some other categories of worshiped boulders.

Translated by Frog and Eila Stepanova

NOTES

1 Blue Stone, Blue Stone,
Blue Stone weighing five poods.
The Blue Stone does not pull so much
As accursed love.
This short song was written down in the Rostov District of the Jaroslavl' Oblast near the Blue Stone of the village of Trjaslovo discussed below (see Ahlqvist 2005: 105, 2006: 11; cf. also Malanin 2004b: 90).

2 These collections of fieldwork materials are not indicated with individual citations in this paper. Owing to limitations of space, fieldwork data on Blue Stones is primarily presented in overview; only a few key examples which are relevant to multiple aspects of discussion are presented in detail. Other types of sacred cult stones are only addressed briefly when they are able to add depth and insight to the understanding of Blue Stones through comparison and contrast. A more detailed systematic study of the data is planned as a monograph which will present cartographic data as well as descriptions of sacred places in nature, including, but not limited to, Blue Stones and other cult stones in Central Russia.

3 This number only includes verified cult objects referred to as "Blue Stone" or places bearing that name. This number does not include examples from data on places or objects called "Blue Stone" which have not yet been adequately verified by the author.

4 Cf. Aleksandrov 2000: 122, and also Ahlqvist 1995: 12, 20, 23, 1996: 247.

5 See e.g. Tret'jakov 1939: 60, Berdnikov 1985: 134, *SPAYO*: 24, Agrafonov 1993: 202, Komarov 2003: 414–417; cf. Dubov 1990a: 106, 1995: 53.

6 See e.g. Dubov 1990a: 101, 1990b: 171, 1995: 51–52, Ahlqvist 1995: 8, 13, Komarov 2003: 418. Some researchers think that *The Life of the Venerable Irinarx of Rostov* is from the end of the 16th century (see e.g. Berdnikov 1985: 134–136, Bakaev 1996: 87), but if V. Berdnikov (1985: 136) is correct in his claim that the stone was buried in the beginning of the 17th century, then the text cannot predate that event.

7 It is necessary to mention that one famous researcher of local history, M. I. Smirnov (2004 [1928]: 63) already pointed out the discontinuity in the name of the stone, but he nonetheless drew a correlation between the Blue Stone and the

"stone" of the sources.

8 See e.g. Smirnov 1919, 2004 [1928]: 5, 26, Berdnikov 1985: 136–139, Komarov 2003: 423, *AKYO*: 162; cf. Dubov 1990a: 101–102, 1995: 52–53, Bakaev 1996: 88.

9 Uses of the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo for healing and offerings made to it in the present day are very difficult to consider as the continuation of old traditions (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 13–14, and also Komarov 2003: 423).

10 I. D. Malanin (2004b: 90–92) makes an interesting observation regarding one of the groups of Blue Stones which he investigated in the Moscow Oblast: the forest road near the stones "does not lead anywhere" and the road ends at the Blue Stones. Malanin does not exclude the possibility that a sanctuary, a sacred grove of ancient Finno-Ugrian peoples, may have been situated at this location (see also Malanin 2004a). Regarding this, V. Vaitkevičius's (1998: 726) hypothesis, based on Lithuanian materials, that some roads had ritual functions, warrants consideration. It might be possible to suggest a parallel to this hypothesis in the names of a few roads referred to as "The White Road" (Белая дорога) in the region of the present investigation, two of which exhibit a direct connection to Blue Stones.

11 Correspondingly, the motif of a stone along the road functions as a boundary marker or is itself a boundary in Russian folklore, and "The Grey-Burning Stone" (Сер-горюч камень) found in northern Russian tales marks a fork in the road (see Demidenko 1987: 88–89). According to some sources, "The White Burning Stone" (Бел горюч камень) could also stand in an open field or at a fork in the road (see Demidenko 1987: 92). It must be remembered that a well-known magical characteristic of the place where three roads meet is that they are considered dangerous locations at which a connection with the otherworld can easily be established (see e.g. Siikala 1992: 164, Aleksandrov 2000: 119).

12 In addition, a lone cult boulder called "The Divine Stone" (Божественный камень), with variants on the name such as "The Holy Stone" (Святой камень) and "The Christian Stone" (Христианский камень), was found in the Kal'jazin District (Tver' Oblast), and eye-witness informants could still recall sacrificial rituals conducted at the stone (see further Ahlqvist 2006: 23–24). Recently a "God Stone" (Богов камень or Божий камень), also called "Blue Stone", has been found in the Kinešma District (Ivanovo Oblast).

13 *ŽPI*: 1373, and e.g. Dubov 1990a: 106, 1990b: 173, 1995: 53, Komarov 2003: 418.

14 The demand for absolute purity expressed in the form of chalked white shoes has analogies in the traditions of the Volgic and Permic Finno-Ugrians, for example, among whom the white colour was sacred and employed in ritual.

15 Actually, the Blue Stone of Marino, which disappeared, was also a petroglyph stone. According to descriptions, it may have belonged to one of the most unique subtypes of this category of stones – icon stones in particular – which were found by our research group in the Ivanovo and Kostroma Oblasts. Some pre-Christian symbols have also been found on these stones. Without doubt, these impressive cult objects initially belonged to vernacular belief traditions (see further Ahlqvist 2006: 24–25). The rituals attached to the Blue Stone of Marino are strongly reminiscent of the traditions associated with worshiping "Village Community Stones" (Мирские камни) near Rostov Velikij (see below).

16 This reflects an implicit connection between Blue Stones and a significant number of Devil Stones (Чёртов камень) from the investigated area, which exhibit some similarities to Blue Stones (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 107–108, 2006: 15–16). The cup-marked stone called Lešixin Stone (Лешихин камень), behind the village of Kobjakovo (Rostov District), also has certain similarities with them. The name of this stone is explained by local people as deriving from Russian *lešij* ['forest spirit'] (i.e. "Forest Spirit Stone"), a being that makes people get lost in the forest. (See further Ahlqvist 2005: 107, 2006: 15, 2012: 18.)

17 Magical healing properties are particularly connected to so-called print stones, on which a mark believed to be a handprint, footprint, etc. appears (see further Ahlqvist 2005: 110–111, 2006: 20–21 and works there cited).

18 A conical indentation of the Blue Stone of the meadow of Šalkovo near Rostov Velikij (see Ahlqvist 1995: 10, 22, 25, 1996: 249, 2012: 26) is dated by archaeologists as not being prehistoric (personal communications Carpelan & Uino 2007 and 2010). According to Malanin (2004a, 2004b: 90–91), a few of the Blue Stones from the Moscow Oblast are cup stones, but any connection with the cup-marked stones of the Merja territories of the chronicles remains uncertain without a scientific description of these stones (cf. also Kurbatov 2002: 562–563).

19 Although the name "Village Community Stone" is normally (though not always) singular, it usually refers to a complex of two stones. This name is explained by people as deriving from Russian *mir* ['world, universe'] in its archaic meaning, "village community" (see further Ahlqvist 1996: 448, 251, 253). Interestingly, Frog (2008: 149) addresses precisely "two stones" connected to images of the *axis mundi* and world tree, and E. L. Demidenko (1987: 85, 89) also provides examples of the pillar and the tree (among others) as equivalent in significance to the common folklore image of the stone. It seems possible that precisely Village Community Stones could reflect an image of the *axis mundi* in the investigated area, but this is a subject for further research.

20 The archaeologists Christian Carpelan and Pirjo Uino had the opportunity to investigate three cup-marked stones near Rostov Velikij. They reached the conclusion that these stones are completely identical to the cup-marked stones of Finland and the Baltic Sea region as a whole (personal communications Carpelan & Uino 2007 and 2010).

21 See *SKVR* VII_4 1760, $XIII_3$ 9040, Mansikka 1911: 1ff., Siikala 1992: 161, Frog 2009: 12ff.

22 See further Mansikka 1911, Haavio 1967: 259ff., Siikala 1992: 161–163. In Russian incantations, the central stone of the sea is also called *Alatyr'*, *Latyr'* and so on (see e.g. Mansikka 1911: 8, Haavio 1967: 374). The mythic *Alatyr'* Stone of incantations is accompanied by the epithet "white-burning" (бел-горюч, белый горючий) and "white stone *Latyr'*" (белый камень Латырь), but there also could be a "grey-brown stone" (серый бурый камень) or a "grey stone" (сер камень) (see e.g. Afanas'ev 1868: 142, Ageeva 1982: 141, 149 and below).

23 According to Demidenko (1987: 86, 88), the common folklore image of the stone appears as the center around which all kinds of magical powers, including diseases, are concentrated. In the world model of Eastern Slavs, illnesses are banished onto the *Alatyr'* Stone, and the White Stone (белый камень) appears as a variant for the location to which illnesses and impure powers are banished in Russian and Belarusian incantation texts (see Ageeva 1982: 141ff.).

24 It is interesting that in Northern Russia, it was recommended to jump on a Blue Stone for the neutralization of the poison form a snake-bite (see Mullonen 2008: 104).

25 *SKVR* I_1 35, XV 308, Mansikka 1911, Siikala 1992: 163–164, Frog 2008: 141, 146ff., 2009: 17, and also Ahlqvist 1995: 18. Belarusian legend presents a similar motif in a simpler form: a powerful *bogatyr'* ['hero; giant'] breaks a large stone with his huge hammer and obtains the life of the snake concealed within it (Ivanov & Toporov 1974: 86, Demidenko 1987: 91, Aleksandrov 2000: 120–121). Correspondingly, the *Latyr'* Stone (Латырь-камень) is mentioned as a location of snakes' banishment, and the Archangel Michael or some other figure cut off their heads with a golden sword on top of this stone (Ageeva 1982: 156). Demidenko (1987: 95) concludes that the snake flies or slithers to the sacrificial stone to receive the victim.

26 The stone *Alatyr'* is correspondingly considered an intermediary between the sky and the earth, as a boundary between two worlds (see Ageeva 1982: 141ff.).

27 See also Dubov 1990a: 104, 106, Komarov 2003: 417; cf. *ESRY* III: 624, Tolstoj 1995: 398–399.
28 See e.g. Dubov 1990a: 103ff., 1990b: 173, 1995: 54–55, Komarov 2003: 417ff.; cf. Ahlqvist 1995: 20–21.
29 It is necessary to bear in mind that the common folklore image of the stone is generally considered to be related to death and to the journey to the otherworld (see further Demidenko 1987: 93, 98).
30 It is of course possible that in some cases a corresponding toponym may occur as a descriptive name which emphasizes precisely the colour of a stone with a blue cast. Nevertheless, the concepts of *Blåkulla* ['Blue Hill'] and *Vitkulla* ['White Hill'] near the Baltic Sea are in a certain respect related to the mythological complex discussed in this paper. In Sweden, there is a belief that during Easter, witches fly to the frightful Blue Hill, which is sometimes addressed as a common Scandinavian locus for the witches' Sabbath. (See Frog 2008: 154.)
31 The belief about a forest spirit wandering at night in the field called White Stone is reminiscent of the practices at Udmurt places of prayer called *Aktaš* (< Turkic 'White Stone'), for honouring an evil god which is active after sunset (Šutova 2001: 56).
32 R. A. Ageeva (1982: 141) addresses the White Stone as a common Slavic image in cosmogonic legends; in addition, she points out the pre-Christian origin of the miraculous stone. It is nonetheless necessary to point out that the element of the epic formula "white stone *Latyr*'" (белый камень Латырь) is characteristic precisely of Northern Russian incantations (see Ageeva 1982: 150). The image of the "white-burning stone" (бел-горюч камень) appears in folksongs of the Vologda and Olonec Provinces (see Afanas'yev 1868: 142; cf. the short song about the Blue Stone in the epigraph). This, as well as the information presented above, show that the image also has a significant position in Finno-Ugric mythology. In addition, the image of a White (or Grey) Stone in the blue sea appears in Lithuanian incantations (see Mansikka 1929: 95, 97).
33 It is extremely interesting that "Blue Stone" (Синий Камень) is encountered as the name of a place of habitation in the Orël Province (2) as well as of a creek; in Belorussia, in the Vitebsk (2) and Grodno (1) Provinces; and in the Vilnius Province (1) (see *RGN* I: 76, VIII: 280, *WRG* II: 236). No places of habitation with the name "*Black Stone" (*Чёрный камень) are ever mentioned within the former Russian Empire, but no less than twelve villages are known with the name "White Stone" (Белый камень) (see *RGN* I: 334, IV: 29, and also *WRG* II: 236).
34 Of special interest is a 14th century runic inscription from Denmark, which mentions a stone named "Black" (*Svartr*) in the middle of the sea to which illnesses were banished (DR EM85;493–"Ribe Healing-Stick"; cf. Siikala 1992: 161).
35 Analogically, the Blue Stone (*kivi sininen*) and the black river of Death (*Tuonen musta joki*) – among other examples – are localized together in Finno-Karelian folk poetry (e.g. *SKVR* VII$_1$ 835, 263, 267). It is possible to find many examples of actual equivalence of the adjectives "blue" (синий) and "black" (чёрный) in both folklore sources and in the everyday lexicon of, for example, Finno-Ugrian languages and of Russian.
36 See *PSRL* V: 73–74; see also Rybakov 1988: 254, Ryabinin 1990: 181–182, Sarmela 1994: 47.
37 See Sarmela 1994: 44ff. Ageeva (1982: 136) has observed that clearly localized toponyms are customarily attached to incantations of hunters and fishermen as well as incantations for different diseases. According to her, this is because help is expected from a very concrete object, from a forest or river – or in the present case, from a stone.
38 See e.g. Gorjunova 1961: 138ff., Dubov 1990a: 106; cf. also Ryabinin 1990.
39 The archaeological study of cult stones in Central Russia has been very poorly

executed. In this context, it is nevertheless interesting that ceramics of the Pitted Ware Culture as well as Arabic coins from the 9th century were found at the legendary Blue Stone of Lake Pleščeevo (see further Ahlqvist 1995: 23), and a few pieces of Merjan ceramics from the 9th–10th centuries near the Grigorovo print stone in the Vladimir Oblast called "Healing" (Целительный), concerning which there is information about healing rites and sacrifices (Bakaev 1996: 89–90).

40 An example of this could be the Germanic motifs which have, according to Frog (2008: 141, 146ff.), mingled with image of the Blue Stone in Finno-Karelian traditions. Frog proposes that the Baltic impact was slightly weaker.

41 Sources listed here do not include materials collected in our own fieldwork mentioned above.

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